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Ga. megachurch pastor pledges to fight accusations



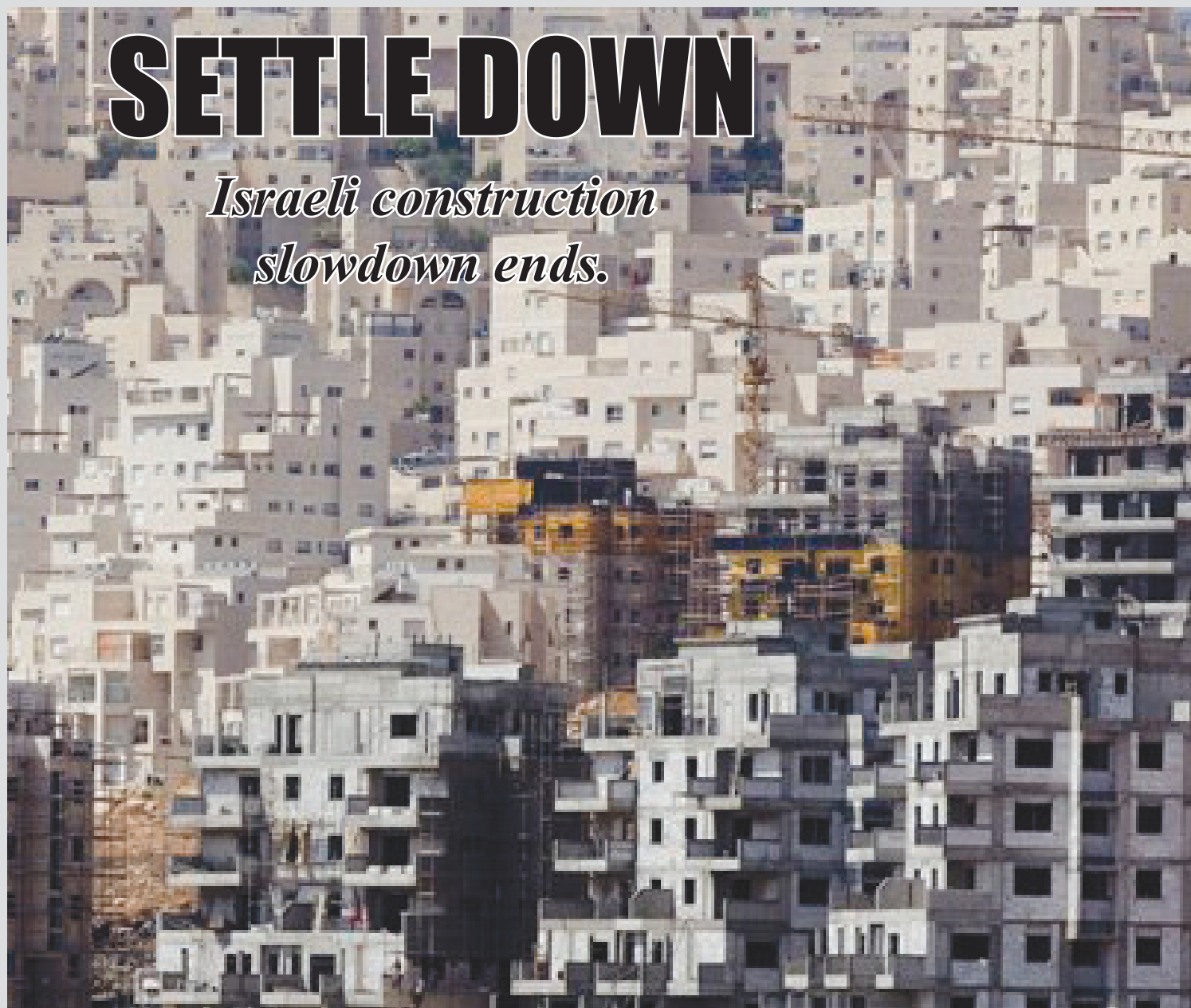
Bishop Eddie Long walks to the pulpit with his wife, Vanessa Long, Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010, at New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Atlanta. Bishop Eddie Long, the pastor of a Georgia megachurch accused of luring young men into sexual relationships, has told his congregation of thousands that all people must face painful and distasteful situations.

(AP Photo/John Amis, Pool)

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SETTLE DOWN

*Israeli construction
slowdown ends.*



In this photo taken Thursday, Sept. 23, 2010, buildings of a new housing development mix with old ones in Har Homa, a Jewish neighborhood of east Jerusalem, which Palestinians and Israelis claim. Israel imposed the 10-month moratorium in a gesture to get the Palestinians to agree to peace talks. It is not a total freeze on all settlement construction as some building projects approved before the slowdown was announced are allowed to continue.

Associated Press

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Flood fight continues in parts of Minn., Wis.



Floodwaters partially submerge vehicles in a used car lot in Owatonna, Minn. on Friday, Sept. 24, 2010.

(AP Photo)

By STEVE KARNOWSKI,
Associated Press Writer
MINNEAPOLIS — With 240 guests expected, Luke Fischer and Rachel Smith weren't about to let the widespread flooding in southern Minnesota get in the way of their wedding Saturday.
The 24-year-olds, who live in the Minneapolis suburb of St. Louis Park, went back to her hometown of Waseca to get

married at the Church of the Sacred Heart. Their reception was about 10 miles away at the Owatonna Country Club, in a city where 70 homes had to be evacuated.
"We're pretty happy we don't have to take a duck boat to the reception," a relieved Fischer joked a few hours before the nuptials.
With the Owatonna area drying out, officials at the

state's Emergency Operations Center said the focus Saturday included Zumbro Falls and Hammond in southeastern Minnesota, and St. Clair and Madelia in south-central Minnesota. Across the border, concern shifted to the rising Wisconsin River in central Wisconsin.
A slow march of thunderstorms across southern Minnesota through central Wisconsin from Wednesday through Friday dumped several inches of rain across the region. Storm totals between 5 and 7 inches were common, with 10.86 inches at Amboy in south-central Minnesota. The governors of both states declared states of emergency.
In Owatonna, a town of about 24,000 about 65 miles south of Minneapolis, Maple Creek, Turtle Creek and the Straight River were receding Saturday. Emergency Operations Manager Mike Johnson said he didn't expect levels to

rise, despite some rain in the forecast.
In Wabasha County, Zumbro Falls and Hammond continued to report heavy flooding Saturday. Residents were evacuated from both cities Friday, and the Zumbro River was continuing to rise Saturday, officials said.
The Post-Bulletin of Rochester reported that Zumbro Falls, where 180 people were forced to leave their homes, remained deserted Saturday.
The newspaper also reported on a dramatic rescue of horses in Zumbro Falls. Wading through floodwaters up to their chests, Lamar Johnson and his nephew, Matt Johnson, were able to free four horses that were tied up and surrounded by water.
Matt Johnson tried to lead the horses through strong currents, but the horses pulled away and were swept downstream. Fortunately, the horses managed to swim to

shore, where Lamar Johnson's wife caught hold of them.
In Blue Earth County, St. Clair asked residents to avoid using water, including their toilets and drains, because high water on the Le Sueur River was causing the sanitary sewer system to fail. State authorities were responding to the city's request for 50,000 additional sandbags Saturday.
In Watonwan County, crews in Madelia sandbagged around four homes to protect them from the rising Watonwan River.
In central Wisconsin, Columbia County Emergency Management asked people living in Blackhawk Park near Portage and in any low-lying areas near the Wisconsin River to relocate. Deputy Director Kathy Johnson said no evacuations have been ordered. She said they're "just strongly encouraging" people in low-lying areas along the river to leave. □







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Ga. megachurch pastor pledges to fight accusations

By ERRIN HAINES,
Associated Press Writer

LITHONIA, Ga. — The famed pastor of a Georgia megachurch said Sunday that he will fight allegations that he lured young men into sexual relationships, stressing that he'd be back to lead the church the next week.

Addressing a New Birth Missionary Baptist Church sanctuary packed with thousands, Bishop Eddie Long neither discussed specifics of the lawsuits filed against him nor flatly denied the accusations. But he drew thunderous applause when he addressed his flock publicly for the first time since the first lawsuits were filed several days ago.

"There have been allegations and attacks made on me. I have never in my life portrayed myself as a perfect man. But I am not the man that's being portrayed on the television. That's not me. That is not me," he said as applause interrupted him. Four young men have filed lawsuits in the past week — three who live in Georgia and one from Charlotte, N.C., who attended one of Long's satellite churches there. Two claim they were members of the church's LongFellows Youth Academy, a program that taught teens about sexual and financial discipline, when Long gave them gifts and took them on trips to seduce them.

Long — who has been an outspoken opponent of gay marriage and whose church has counseled gay members to become straight — has been named as a defendant in the lawsuits, which claim the pastor abused his "spiritual authority." But federal and state authorities have said they will not investigate the allegations because all four men were 17 and 18 years old when the relationships with Long began — older than Georgia's age of consent, which is 16.

Long told the crowd that his lawyers had advised him not to "try this case in the media."

He spoke little about the legal case during the service and a news conference afterward, though Long spoke at length about enduring painful situations.

"We are all subject to face distasteful and painful situations. Bishop Long, Eddie Long — you can put your name in that blank — will have some bad situations," he said. "The righteous face painful situations with a determined expectancy. We are not exempt from pain, but He promises to deliver us out of our pain."

Long's final remarks during the service invoked the biblical story of the small David doing battle with the gargantuan Goliath.

"I've been accused; I'm under attack. I want you to know, as I said earlier, I am not a perfect man," he said, briefly pausing for effect. "But this thing I'm going to fight."

"I want you to know one other thing, I feel like David against Goliath. But I got five rocks, and I haven't thrown one yet."

Church members who heard Long's speech pledged to stand by their pastor. Annie Cannon, who has attended New Birth for seven years, said she had no plans to worship elsewhere.

"We know and we love bishop," Cannon said, referring to Long. "We love our place of worship. My son goes to school here. We do everything here."

Cheryl Barnett has attended New Birth since Long became senior pastor more than 20 years ago. She said she agreed wholeheartedly with his remarks.

"I was very much fulfilled with what he had to say," she said. "It was simple. It was direct. He's standing in the scriptures. That's what we would expect from our minister."

About 100 people waited at the doors of the church more than an hour before the first service. Some held signs of support, while others prayed

for their embattled leader. A small group sang the hymn "White as Snow" while outside.

Members in their seats clapped and swayed as the service began around 8 a.m., with several people with microphones singing on stage. Later in the service, hundreds began dancing and chanting, "Jesus, Jesus." A small group of young people held Apple iPads high over their heads, with the screens scrolling white letters against a black background reading, "It's time to praise him."

Long, a father of four children, came to the stage holding hands with his wife, Vanessa, and wearing a cream-colored suit.

Media access to the services was tightly controlled Sunday. Reporters were required to check in with church officials and were led to a separate part of the church to view the service. The media was also told not to interview church members inside the sanctuary or on church property.

Over the past 20 years, Long became one of the most powerful independent church leaders in the country. He led New Birth as it grew from a suburban Atlanta congregation of 150 to a 25,000-member powerhouse with a \$50 million cathedral and a roster of parishioners that includes athletes, entertainers and politicians. He flashed his prosperity by wearing diamonds and platinum jewelry, while building strong political ties and a close relationship with the family of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. The 2006 funeral for King's widow, Coretta Scott King, was held at New Birth. Their daughter, the Rev. Bernice King, is also a pastor at Long's church and spoke during Sunday's first service.

Long also spoke during an 11 a.m. service, during which a young man in a blue shirt stood up and shouted: "We want to know the truth, man!" He was quickly escorted out



Worshippers prepare for Bishop Eddie Long, Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010, in Atlanta. Bishop Eddie Long, the pastor of a Georgia megachurch accused of luring young men into sexual relationships, has told his congregation of thousands that all people must face painful and distasteful situations.

(AP Photo/John Amis, Pool)

and did not return.

But most of his welcomes were warm. As Long entered the cathedral, a group of people shouted, "We love

you bishop!"

"I love you, New Birth," Long replied.

"I'm not leaving you if you don't leave me." □

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Obama dismisses GOP 'Pledge' as echo of disaster



President Barack Obama waves as he arrives on the South Lawn of the White House on Friday, Sept. 24, 2010 in Washington.

(AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

By ERICA WERNER,
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama says Republicans' plan to slash taxes and cut spending if the

GOP retakes the House in November is no more than "an echo of a disastrous decade we can't afford to relive."

Obama used his weekly radio and Internet address Saturday

to skewer House Republicans over the "Pledge to America" they unveiled this week. It also promised to cut down on government regulation, repeal Obama's health care law and end his stimulus program.

"The Republicans who want to take over Congress offered their own ideas the other day. Many were the very same policies that led to the economic crisis in the first place, which isn't surprising, since many of their leaders were among the architects of that failed policy," Obama said.

"It is grounded in same worn-out philosophy: cut taxes for millionaires and billionaires; cut the rules for Wall Street and the special interests; and cut the middle class loose to fend for itself. That's not

a prescription for a better future." Republicans used their own radio address to defend the plan.

"The new agenda embodies Americans' rejection of the notion that we can simply tax, borrow and spend our way to prosperity," said one of its authors, California Rep. Kevin McCarthy. "It offers a new way forward that hasn't been tried in Washington — an approach focused on cutting spending — which is sadly a new idea for a Congress accustomed to always accelerating it."

The GOP plan was short on specifics but showed a stark contrast between the philosophies of the two parties weeks ahead of midterm elections where Republicans

are forecast to make big gains and potentially win back the House. Perhaps the biggest difference was on taxes, where Republicans want to extend all of George W. Bush's income tax cuts permanently — at a cost of some \$4 trillion over 10 years.

Democrats are proposing to keep the rates where they are for individuals making up to \$200,000 and for families earning up to \$250,000 — but to hit wealthier individuals and some small businesses with tax hikes in January. Their plan would cost \$3 trillion. Now, though, it's not clear there will be a final vote in Congress on either approach before November's elections □

Vulnerable House Dems declare their independence



FILE - In this Aug. 12, 2008 file photo, then-Nevada House candidate Dina Titus addresses supporters in Henderson, Nev. Titus has been a loyal soldier in pushing the Democrats' ambitious agenda, voting for health care legislation, extended unemployment benefits, new energy taxes and a repeal of the military's ban on gays serving openly. Her campaign signs for the Nov. 2 election, however, proclaim her to be an 'independent voice' for Nevadans.

(AP Photo/Jae C. Hong, File)

By CRISTINA SILVA,
Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS — Rep. Dina Titus has been a loyal soldier in pushing the Democrats' ambitious agenda, voting for health care legislation, extended unemployment benefits, new energy taxes and a repeal of the military's ban on gays serving openly. Her campaign signs, however,

proclaim Titus an "independent voice" for Nevadans.

Aware that their stock has taken the same tumble as home values, Congress' most vulnerable Democrats are declaring their independence from their party's agenda in Facebook profiles, television advertisements, news interviews and campaign websites leading up to the Nov. 2 election. That's when Republicans hope to retake control of the House they lost four years ago.

The rebranders include Democratic Reps. Betsy Markey and John Salazar in Colorado, Zack Space in Ohio, Jason Altmire in Pennsylvania, Glenn Nye in Virginia and Joe Donnelly in Indiana. In Texas, Rep. Chet Edwards, once promoted as a potential running mate for Barack Obama, has become a vocal critic of his party's policies. The tactic could hurt Democratic turnout at a time when the party needs to protect its majority in Congress, some political strategists say.

"They want to get turnout as high as possible among those who vote for Democrats," said Joseph Bafumi, a government professor at Dartmouth College. "Running away from the president or the party might not be the way to do it." □

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NJ cops seeking man who killed Seton Hall student

EAST ORANGE, N.J. — New Jersey authorities are asking the public's help in finding a man who opened fire at a party, killing a Seton Hall University student and wounding four other people.

East Orange police say no arrest had been made by late Sunday morning. The party

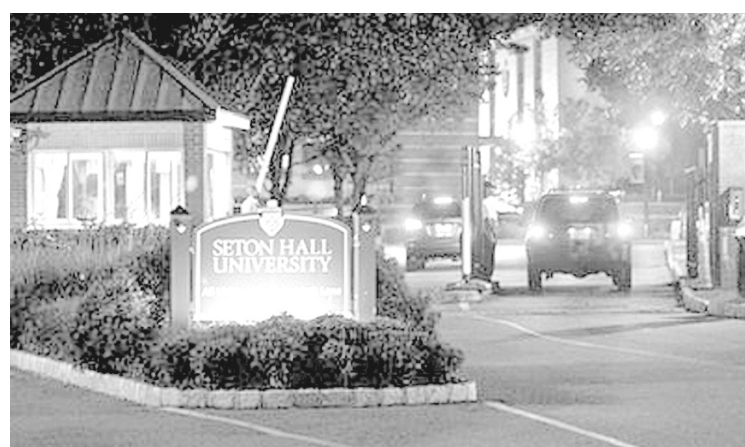
was held late Friday night into Saturday morning at a home about a mile from the Seton Hall campus.

Police and witnesses say the suspect was kicked out of the party because he didn't want to pay the cover charge.

They say he left and returned with a gun.

An electronic sign near the shooting site advertises a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the suspect's capture.

The slain student was 19-year-old Jessica Moore of Disputanta, Va. Four other people, including three Seton Hall students, suffered non-life-threatening injuries. □



All vehicles trying to enter Seton Hall University campus tonight were stopped at the security gate after five students were shot, one of whom has died, at an off campus party today, Saturday Sept. 25, 2010 in East Orange, NJ.

(AP Photo/Joe Epstein)

8 shot, 3 stabbed, 1 dead at east LA house party

LOS ANGELES — Eight people were shot — one fatally — and another three stabbed Saturday after a fight broke out at a birthday party, authorities said.

One man, Steven Lopez, 22, died at the scene and two other gunshot victims were taken to County-USC Medical Center with critical injuries, police said.

A dispute at the late-night house party in the Boyle Heights neighborhood escalated until several people pulled out guns and knives.

The condition of the other five shooting victims was described only as stable and there was no

word on the condition of the stabbing victims, but all the remaining victims were expected to survive. "I've never seen so many aggravated assaults in one scene," Capt. Anita Ortega told the Los Angeles Times.

No arrests have been made. Ortega said that different kind of shell casings at the scene suggested multiple shooters.

The incident does not appear to be gang related, authorities said. "We have no indication that this was a gang site," Ortega said. "Only that it was a house party open to everyone with a fee of \$10 and a lot of beer." □

NYC mother, boyfriend arrested in death of boy, 2

NEW YORK — A 27-year-old woman and her boyfriend have been arrested in the beating death of the woman's 2-year-old son in New York City.

Police say the boyfriend, 31-year-old Reginald Williams, was arrested Saturday on murder charges.

The boy's mother, Teresa Foster, was arrested on charges of weapons possession and endangering the welfare of a child. Both are awaiting arraignment.

Aiyden Davis was found unresponsive

inside a Brooklyn apartment at about 10:30 p.m. Friday after a 911 call reporting an assault.

The boy was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital.

A spokeswoman for the medical examiner says the cause of death was blunt impact injuries to his head, torso and extremities.

A spokesman for Administration for Children's Services says the agency is investigating. □



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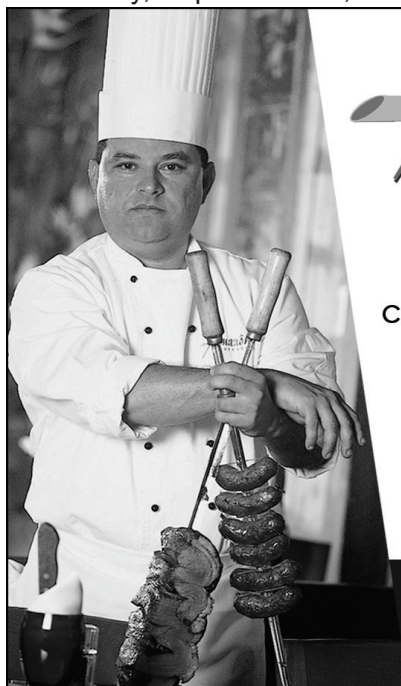
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Israeli building slowdown ends; settlers celebrate



Jewish settlers participate in a cornerstone laying ceremony for a daycare center at the West Bank Jewish settlement of Kiryat Netafim, Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010. With a midnight deadline looming, Israel's prime minister on Sunday called on West Bank settlers to "show restraint" after the end of a government-ordered construction slowdown, attempting to lower tensions with the Palestinians and prevent a breakdown in newly relaunched Mideast talks.

Associated Press

ARON HELLER

Associated Press Writer

REVAVA, West Bank (AP) — Jewish settlers released balloons and broke ground on a kindergarten in celebration Sunday as a 10-month construction slowdown expired, while U.S. and Israeli leaders tried to figure out how to keep Palestinians from walking out of peace talks over the end of the restrictions. After the slowdown ran out at midnight, there was no Palestinian statement about the future of the talks. The Palestinians asked for an Oct. 4 meeting of an Arab League body to discuss the situation, possibly giving diplomats an extra week to work out a compromise.

Minutes after the expiration, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called on the Palestinians not to walk

away, but instead to maintain constant contact "to achieve a historic framework accord within a year." In a statement, Netanyahu said his "intention to achieve peace is genuine." Palestinians have questioned whether they can make peace with Netanyahu, known as a hard-liner.

Israeli settlers were not waiting, celebrating the end of the slowdown and planning to send bulldozers into action in two places in the West Bank early Monday.

In Revava, a settlement deep in the West Bank, about 2,000 activists released 2,000 balloons in the blue and white of the Israeli flag at sundown Sunday. The balloons were meant to symbolize the 2,000 apartments that settlers say are ready to be built immediately. "Today it's over and we will do everything we can to make

sure it never happens again," settler leader Dani Dayan told the crowd. "We return with new energy and a new determination to populate this land."

It was unclear what how the official end of the slowdown would affect construction. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has already signaled future settlement construction will be kept to a minimum, in contrast to relatively unfettered housing activity of past Israeli governments.

The Palestinians have said they will quit the negotiations if Israel resumes building, though President Mahmoud Abbas said in a published interview Sunday in the pan-Arabic daily al-Hayat that he would consult with Arab partners first to weigh his options.

Speaking in Paris Sunday, Abbas said, "There is only one choice in front of Israel: either peace or settlements."

The settlers' festivities went ahead despite Netanyahu's call for them to show restraint as the curbs are lifted. Palestinians oppose all settlements built on territories they claim for a future state, and renewed building could endanger negotiations launched early this month by the Obama administration.

The deadlock over settlements has created the first crisis in the negotiations, and U.S. mediators raced to bridge the gap between the Israelis and Palestinians. But a deal was far from certain.

U.S. Secretary of State

Hillary Rodham Clinton spoke Sunday with Netanyahu and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, the representative of the "Quartet" of Mideast peacemakers, State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said. "We keep pushing for the talks to continue," Crowley said.

A U.S. official who was not authorized to speak publicly about the U.S. involvement in the peace process said talks among the U.S., Israeli and the Palestinians were taking place Sunday.

"They are talking. Intense efforts are ongoing," the official said.

Abbas faces intense internal pressure from his supporters not to relax his conditions. Also, the rival Islamic Hamas, which controls Gaza, opposes peace talks with Israel in principle. Israeli police said Palestinian gunmen shot and lightly wounded an Israeli motorist in Hebron, close to where a deadly shooting earlier this month killed four Israeli settlers.

Netanyahu, under pressure from pro-settler hard-liners in his governing coalition, said he would not extend the slowdown on construction he imposed 10 months ago. The curbs, which expire at midnight, prevented new housing starts in the West Bank, though the government allowed thousands of units already under construction to be finished.

A similar, but undeclared, slowdown has also been in place in east Jerusalem, the area of the holy city claimed

by the Palestinians.

The deadline had not yet expired when several dozen settlers groundbreaking ceremony for a new kindergarten Sunday in the Kiryat Netafim settlement.

"For 10 months, you have been treated as second-class citizens," Danny Danon, a pro-settler lawmaker in Netanyahu's Likud Party, said at the ceremony. "Today, we return to build in all the land of Israel."

In nearby Revava, a settlement of about 130 Orthodox Jewish families in the rocky hills of the northern West Bank, the crowd included young activists, men wearing trademark knit skullcaps favored by religious settlers and foreign supporters from Norway and China.

Netanyahu imposed the slowdown last November in a bid to draw the Palestinians back to the negotiating table. The Palestinians initially rejected the offer as insufficient, but in recent weeks they demanded that the measures remain in place.

The Palestinians say Israeli construction in the West Bank cripples plans for a viable Palestinian state. Some 300,000 Israelis live in West Bank settlements, scattered among 2.5 million Palestinians. Another 180,000 Israelis live in east Jerusalem. In practice, the slowdown brought about only a slight drop of about 10 percent in ongoing construction, but it cut new housing starts by about 50 percent, according to the dovish Israeli group Peace Now. □

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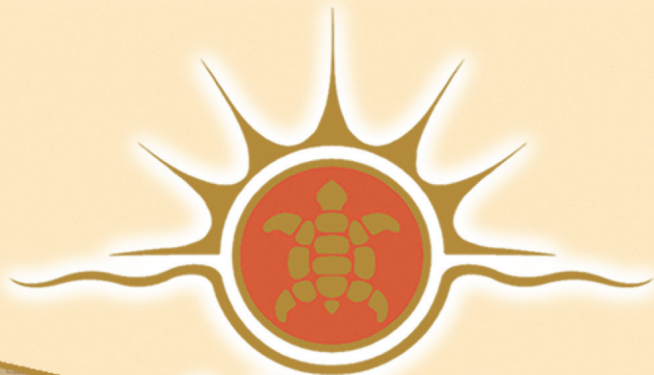
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Iraqi women embrace American mothers of war dead



Iraq's first lady Hiro Ibrahim Ahmed, right, hugs Colleen Parkin from the Gold Star Mothers organization, who lost her son in the line of duty in Iraq, during a meeting of Iraqi and U.S. mothers in Sulaimaniyah, Iraq, Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010. Nine American mothers whose children died fighting in Iraq were embraced Sunday by dozens of Iraqi women who lost their own children during decades of war and violence in a meeting participants said brought them a measure of peace.

YAHYA BARZANJI

Associated Press Writer

SULAIMANIYAH, Iraq (AP)

— Nine American mothers whose children died fighting in Iraq were embraced Sunday

by dozens of Iraqi women who lost their own children during decades of war and violence in a meeting participants said brought them a measure of peace.

The gathering in Iraq's mostly peaceful northern Kurdish region was far from the sites of the roadside bombings or battlefields that accounted for the vast majority of the more than 4,400 U.S. military deaths since the 2003 invasion, but it was still a powerful experience for some mothers to even step foot in Iraq.

Some kissed the ground during their arrival Saturday.

"I was overwhelmed at touch down. We were really on the ground in Iraq. I was almost in disbelief that it was real. This is where my son spent the last days of his life, and now, I was there," said a blog entry by Amy Galvez of Salt Lake City, whose son, Cpl. Adam Galvez, was killed in 2006.

In another web post she said she would return home a "different person."

"I will be in the country where my son spent the last days of his life," she wrote. "I'll have visited the land where a piece of my heart will remain forever."

The beginning of the Americans' three-day trip — organized by a Virginia-based women's aid group, Families United Toward Universal Respect — was attended by officials from State Department and Kurdish regional government.

Nawal Akhil, deputy chief of the group's Baghdad office, said the goal was to "talk about their suffering to find a way to ease it."

"We share the same ordeals and suffering — the American mothers who lost their children and the Iraqi mothers who lost their loved ones during the Saddam Hussein-era and in

the violence since 2003," said Akhil.

Elaine Johnson, of Cordova, South Carolina, said the trip allowed her to come to terms with the loss of her son, Spc. Darius Jennings, killed in November 2003 in Fallujah as the insurgency that went on to rip the country apart gained strength.

"Before making this trip, I was angry for my child's death," she said. "But after making this trip, I feel peace, peace, peace."

The dozens of Iraqi mothers included Kurds whose family members were killed in Saddam's 1980s scorched-earth campaign to wipe out a Kurdish rebellion in the north that claimed at least 100,000 lives, including thousands in poison gas attacks.

"When I hugged an American woman we couldn't express ourselves in words, but what helped us to express our feelings and understand each other were our tears. We found them as a true expression to our grief and suffering," said Peroz Nasser, a 55-year-old Kurdish woman who lost her parents and two brothers and two sisters during Saddam's attacks.

While the mothers met in northern Iraq, other parts of the country were hit by violence

as insurgents attempt to regain lost footholds near Baghdad and continue to pursue an ongoing campaign against public servants in effort to undermine government institutions.

Near the former insurgent stronghold of Fallujah, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) west of Baghdad, a car packed with explosives blew up, killing four policemen including a lieutenant colonel, Iraqi officials said.

In Baghdad, militants flagged down the car of an employee of the country's anti-corruption commission and shot him dead. A Culture Ministry employee died of wounds in a separate shooting.

Later, an Iraqi police captain and an army brigadier general were killed in separate Baghdad shootings by assailants using weapons fitted with silencers, officials said.

Another blast killed a passer-by and wounded seven others in Baghdad's mixed Sunni-Shiite Karradah neighborhood. Officials said the bomb appeared to be targeting a police patrol.

In the northern city of Mosul, gunman killed two brothers in a drive-by shooting, police officials said. The motive for the attack was not immediately known. □

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Chavez fights for control in congressional vote

IAN JAMES

Associated Press Writer

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Opponents of President Hugo Chavez tried to break his long-standing monopoly on power Sunday in congressional elections, while the firebrand leader rallied his supporters urging them to “attack” through the ballot box.

Voters formed long lines at polling stations after being awakened before dawn by fireworks and recorded bugles blaring reveille from loudspeakers. After casting his ballot, Chavez said turnout could be as high as 70 percent.

“The people are speaking,” Chavez said, calling it proof the country has a healthy democracy.

Opposition parties were trying to end Chavez’s domination of the National Assembly for the first time in his nearly 12 years in the presidency. The vote is also seen as a referendum on

Chavez himself ahead of the next presidential election in 2012.

Polls suggest Chavez remains the most popular politician in Venezuela, yet surveys also have shown a decline in his popularity in the past two years as disenchantment has grown over problems including rampant violent crime, poorly administered public services and inflation now hovering at 30 percent. The opposition, which boycotted the last legislative elections in 2005, stands to dramatically increase its representation beyond the 11 or so lawmakers who defected from Chavez’s camp in the current National Assembly. If Chavez’s socialist-oriented government fails to keep at least a two-thirds majority of the 165 seats, opponents would have more clout in trying to check his sweeping powers.

“Democracy is at stake,” said Teresa Bermudez, a 63-year-

old Chavez opponent who stood in a line that ran down a block and around a corner. She said she sees the vote as a vital chance for the opposition to have a voice and achieve a more balanced legislature.

Chavez has fashioned himself as a revolutionary-turned-president carrying on the legacy of his mentor Fidel Castro, with a nationalist vision and a deep-seated antagonism toward the U.S. government. He has largely funded his government with Venezuela’s ample oil wealth, touting social programs targeted to his support base.

Chavez portrayed the vote as a choice between his “Bolivarian Revolution” and opposition politicians he accuses of serving the interests of the wealthy and his adversaries in the U.S. government.

“We’re with this man because this man is the one who has really done things for this country,” said Carmen

Elena Flores de Cordova, a 58-year-old lawyer who dressed in signature Chavez red for to vote. She pointed to government projects in the neighborhood as proof of progress: a new low-income apartment building and cable cars running up into a hillside slum. Both political camps had witnesses at polling stations keeping an eye on the balloting and had invited foreign officials to do the same. Soldiers stood guard during the balloting, joined by civilians belonging to the Bolivarian Militia created by Chavez.

Chavez supporters wearing red T-shirts handed out fliers backing pro-government candidates to voters lined up at a polling station in Caracas’ Petare slum, despite rules barring such activities. Campaign trucks of Chavez’s socialist party also cruised past blaring Venezuelan folk music while a man using



Venezuela’s President Hugo Chavez greets his supporters after voting outside a polling station during congressional elections in Caracas, Venezuela, Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010.

Associated Press

a loudspeaker called for people to “heed the call of the fatherland” and vote.

Some in line complained about such tactics, saying electoral officials were being too tolerant. □

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ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called “Aruhiba”. These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi has always

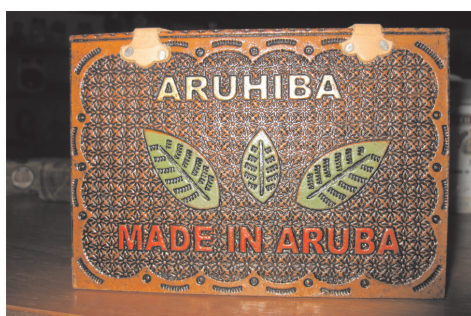


had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The process took ten years. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar box is specially designed for the cigars with the logo “Aruhiba”. Petrocchi considers Aruhiba a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars. The company sells International cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five

cigars and you will get 1 FREE cigar of \$35. Located at the Historic Dutch Windmill.

Open from Monday to Saturday from 9am till 8:30pm. And open on Sunday from 9am to 1pm. At the Tamarijn Hotel open on Monday till Saturday 12pm to 8pm.

And on Sunday from 9am to 1pm. Aruhiba is only available in above mentioned stores. Visit our authentic tobacco farm where cigars are handmade.



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Jeanette Keith wins championship in Body Fitness

Colombian Body Builder Hugo Marquez All Around Winner



PALM BEACH - The Aruba Body Building Association hosted the 38th Central American & Caribbean Amateur Body Building & Fitness Championships held on the weekend in the Ballroom of The Westin Resort at the Palm Beach.

The Colombian athlete Hugo Marquez was chosen as the championship's All Around Winner. Guatemalan Silvia Soberanis won the All Around title in the female category. Over 150 athletes from some 20 countries from

the Central American and Caribbean region competed in the sports event in which the athletes competed in 20 categories. Two of the island's participants took home the champion's title in their respective categories:

Aruban athlete Jeanette Keith won the championship in Body Fitness +1.68 (seen in one of the images holding the championship trophy) and Arnaldo Libert conquered the Lightweight title. □

~Photos by Anthony Carlo





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WEDNESDAY'S NOCHE ITALIANO

Pasta station with penne and spaghetti and choice of 3 sauces, lasagna, meatballs in tomato sauce, mushroom risotto, roasted leg of lamb, roasted rosemary potatoes, ratatouille, breaded fresh grouper fingers, minestrone soup, peel-n-eat shrimp, gourmet salad bar, homemade pastries & cakes, and more!

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Bridal shower/high tea at De Suikertuin

Hugs, kisses and a crown for upcoming bride Stephanie Lejuez



ORANJESTAD - When bride-to-be Stephanie Lejuez entered the lovely courtyard of De Suikertuin restaurant in the Wilhelminastraat, she was met by cheers, hugs and kisses, and before she knew it

she was seated at the head of a festive table wearing a paper crown and sash, proclaiming her upcoming nuptials. The lucky fellow in question who is going to marry Stephanie is Rodney Theysen; the two have

been together for six years, the last two of them being engaged. Their wedding will be on October 1st.

As waitresses Inge and Xandra

came in with the dishes with quiche, sandwiches, cakes and other delicacies and the tea was poured, the story how Rodney and Stephanie met was recounted: Rodney saw her first at drag racing and he could not forget her face. Before long the two had their first date: impressive, as Rodney cooked dinner for her. After that the two have been together. How lovely! Friends and family were present at the great bridal high tea at De Suikertuin. □



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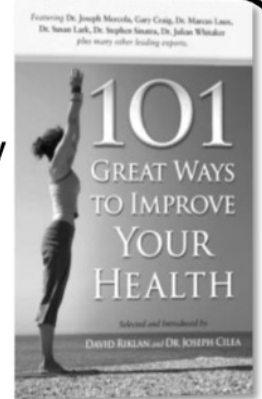
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Co-authored by Aruba's
Carlos Viana, OMD, CCN

Special friends honored at the Caribbean Palm Village Resort



NOORD - Recently at the Caribbean Palm Village Resort vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for ten and 20 consecutive years. Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of goodwill title. The recent honoring were effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Ricardo Croes at the Caribbean Palm Village Resort, they call their home away from home. Tamara Wood-Graig and Helen, Dorothy and Frank Tiedeman were honored as Ambassador of Goodwill after visiting Aruba for more then 20 years, and also Ron & Shirley Pojedinec were honored as Distinguished Visitors for the Island of Aruba.

On picture James & Eileen together with Mr. Ricardo Croes from ATA and also STAFF from the Caribbean Palm Village Resort



Magic FM to work magic during Cas di Glas



ORANJESTAD - One of the best-listened-to radio stations on the island, Magic FM, is jumping into the excitement of the upcoming Cas di Glas fundraising event, which is taking place from September 29 – October 3. Working its magic for its extensive listeners, the station of Erin Croes will be broadcasting from the venue at the Renaissance Marketplace for several hours a day, joining other radio and television stations in attracting people. One of its deejays will also be the event's emcee on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evening.

Magic has always had Aruba's charities high on its list of priorities; the Cas di Glas fundraising effort is touching Erin Croes close to the bone and she utterly agrees to the necessity for a mobile breast cancer screening unit. With lots of media hype and a great team of deejays all the way behind her, Erin Croes is sure to attract the attention of her listeners. Magic FM has a faithful audience of people between 25 and 55 years old; the combination with the 'younger' Cool FM crowd is fantastic. Magic is on the way! □

Would you like to adopt me?



Hello, I am Mira!
I would like to introduce myself to you. I am one of the donkeys at the Donkey Sanctuary. Years ago people found my mother in Angochi, in the middle of the road. She was rescued and taken to the Sanctuary; I was born there last year. My birth was a very special occasion: in nature it is customary with donkeys that the mother hides when the little one is about to be born. And that is also possible at the Sanctuary, because we are splash in the middle of nature there. But when the volunteers were closing up before going home, they saw me, together with my mother! And that was fantastic, of course, such a gorgeous baby donkey. They put us apart quickly, so that my mother could recuperate

after giving birth. And after a while we could leave the stable to play with the other donkeys. I love it there; life is pretty good. I get fed and watered on time and when I get sick the vet comes in to look at me. So we are quite expensive donkeys, all of us. The volunteers try and undertake all kinds of activities and actions to generate money and they sell great donkey stuff at the store. Sometimes very kind people adopt one of the donkeys to support the Sanctuary. And that is also why I am trying to find people who want to adopt me. I will still stay at the Donkey Sanctuary, but you just need to pay thirty florins per month for my upkeep. You help the Sanctuary this way and me as well. You will receive a nice document and a fantastic tee-shirt. Can you call the Sanctuary please? The number is 593-2933. You can also become a sponsor via our website www.arubandonkey.org. Please help. □



EARLY BIRD Special

Three course dinner for **\$25.00**

Served from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Insalate Mista or Homemade Minestrone

Linguini Fruitti Di Mare

or

Fresh Filet Grouper, with a side of pasta or vegetables

or

Chicken Parmigiana, with a side of pasta or vegetables

Caramel Flan or Ice cream

Coffee or Tea

Chef's Special

Spaghetti Al Formaggio Parmigiana \$21

An authentic Italian dish flamed with Whiskey at your table

Sole Mare Special \$42.50

Truly a seafood lover dish – Jumbo shrimp, the lar-gest on the island, mussels, clams, calamari, and Caribbean lobster over a bed of spaghetti

Rib Eye Pizzaiola \$32

USDA certified Angus beef, sautéed with extra virgin olive oil, tomatoes, garlic, and gaeta black olives

Ravioli alla Vodka with Lobster and Shrimp \$45

Kids' Menu \$10

Rigatoni with Meat Sauce, Spaghetti with Meatballs, Fettuccini Alfredo, Meat Lasagna, Mozzarella Sticks, Cheese Ravioli and Chicken Fingers with French Fries

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email: solemarearuba@hotmail.com

Do not miss the upcoming Food &

Wine Festival at Arawak Garden this coming Saturday



PALM BEACH - It's the first Saturday of the month next week and guess what: the popular Food & Wine Festival is held once again at Arawak Garden. With small samples of what the restaurants at Arawak Garden have in store for you, specials, live music and prizes to be won, this festival is always a fun happening. It

starts at 7 pm.

Restaurants at Arawak Garden are Salt & Pepper, Tango Restaurant, Burger King, Fishes & More, Casa Tua and Sopranos, so there is choice enough to make your decision where to have dinner after strolling around and checking out your options. We hope you will have fun! □

RESULTS BRIDGE SESSIONS ALOHA BRIDGE CLUB ARUBA

Thursday morning, 23 September 2010

A total of 11 pairs joined the bridge session at the Members Lounge of the Aruba Beach Club Resort.

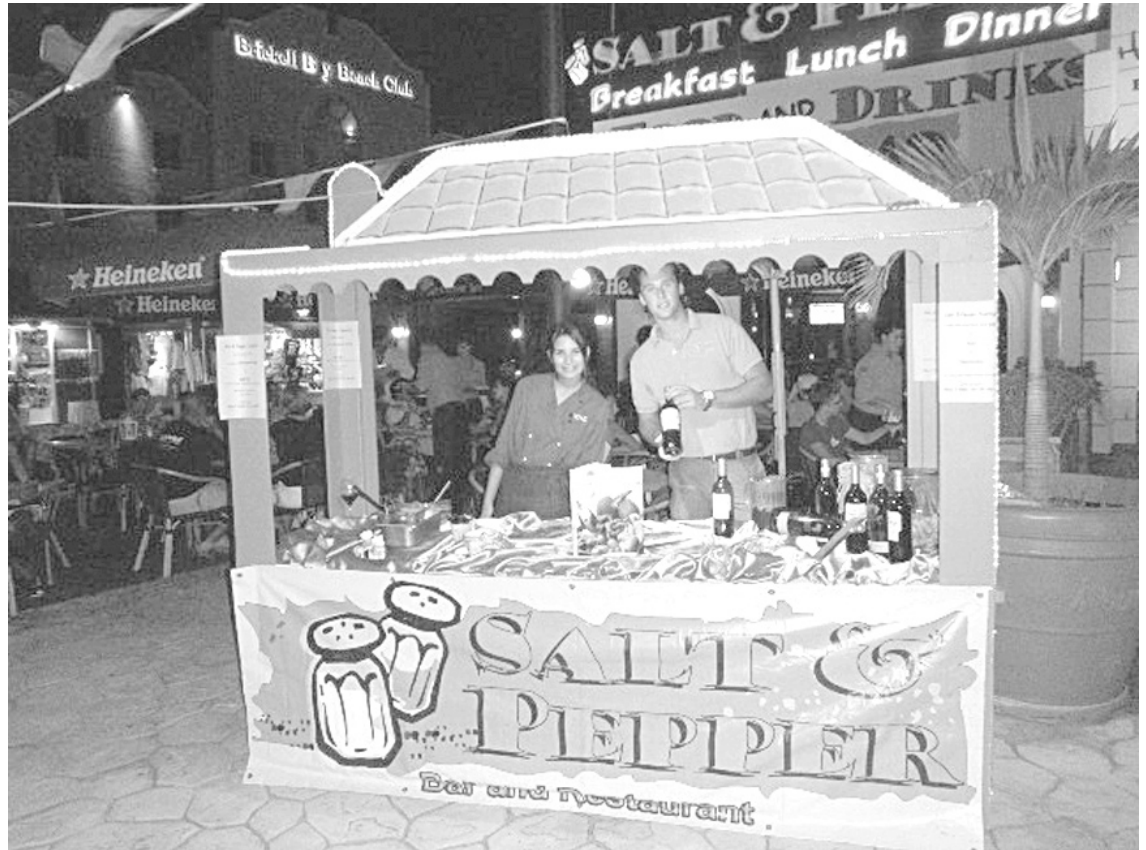
The results 50% and higher are as follows:

- 1 Geke In 't Veld / Annemieke de Cuba 64.13 %
- 2 Joke Henriquez / Annette Ybeles 53.13 %
- 3 Stascha Hornix / Henk Berghuizen 52.76 %
- 4 Helen and Chris Goody 52.63 %
- 5 Wily Flanegin / Kathy Rasenberger 51.25 %
- 6 Lorraine Wright / Addy Eilers 50.81 %
- 7 Nelly Aal / Liesbeth van den Ham 50.44 %

Friday evening, 24 September 2010.

Due to the bad weather conditions the bridge session of this evening had to be cancelled.

Aloha Bridge Club Aruba meets twice a week: on Thursday mornings at the Members Lounge of the Aruba Beach Club Resort, starting at 9.00 am and on Friday evenings at the Frank Conway Roomn of Casa del Mar, starting at 7.30 pm. Signing up closes ten minutes before starting time. Fee for guest players \$ 6.00 or Afl. 10.00 per person. The club can also be of assistance in finding single players a bridge partner. Please call Addy Eilers, tel. 5824953. □



Announcing
The Marriott Vacation Club Destinations™ Ownership Program

NEW DAY. NEW DREAMS.



Marriott Vacation Club Introduces New Vacation Ownership Program



Marriott Vacation Club, the premier timeshare brand of Marriott International, (NYSE: MAR), announced the launch of the points-based Marriott Vacation Club program in North America and the Caribbean. Building on 25 successful years of innovation, evolution and industry leadership, the Marriott Vacation Club Destinations program offers greater flexibility, further personalization and more experience opportunities for Owners.

“After a quarter century of providing unforgettable vacations, we are excited to announce the most significant program innovation in our history: a new product offering that is easy to use and will provide our Owners unparalleled flexibility,” said Lee Cunningham, executive vice president and chief operating officer for Marriott Vacation Club, North America and the Caribbean. “Over the years, we have successfully

evolved our product offering based on Owner feedback, and the Marriott Vacation Club Destinations program reflects a tradition of Owner involvement and was designed specifically for both current and future Owners.” While the Marriott Vacation Club Destinations program in North America and the Caribbean will offer this enhanced opportunity to new customers going forward, current Owners will maintain the full rights and privileges of their ownership. At the same time, existing Owners will have the choice to enroll in this new program to further enhance their vacation experience.

The Marriott Vacation Club Destinations program allows Owners to redeem Vacation Club Points to travel within any of four Vacation Collections: Marriott Vacation Club Collection: Enjoy reservation access among more than 50 luxurious Marriott Vacation Club resorts, including: ease of any day check-in, varied

lengths of stay, wide array of accommodations sizes, and more choice of travel season at resorts in North America and the Caribbean; Marriott Collection: Choose from over 3,000 hotels and experience new destinations through travel for Marriott Reward points; Explorer Collection: Journey to new lands or cruise the seas in luxury with exchange for memorable and exceptional travel packages; and World Traveler Collection: Access a global system of over 2,500 resorts in more than 75 countries through Interval International. Annually, Marriott Vacation Club Destinations Owners will receive an allocation of Vacation Club Points to redeem for customized getaway experiences. They will also have the ability to bank, borrow, or purchase additional Vacation Club Points each year. In addition, the new program provides Owners the services of a personal Vacation Ownership Advisor to assist in travel arrangements within any one of the four Collections. Since its inception in 1984, Marriott Vacation Club has continued to redefine the vacation ownership experience. Owners enjoy the assurance of a program from a recognized leader in the timeshare industry, now offering a more tailored experience enabling effortless travel around the world “the Marriott way.”

Marriott Vacation Club is a worldwide leader in vacation

ownership. In 1984, Marriott became the first branded hospitality company to enter the timeshare industry, adding its signature quality, service and hospitality expertise. After more than 25 years of innovation and evolution, the Marriott Vacation Club Destinations program was introduced in 2010 offering unmatched experiences and unparalleled flexibility through the use of Vacation Club

Points in four Collections that can be tailored to fit an Owner's travel needs. For more information, please visit www.marriottvacationclub.com. For nightly Marriott villa rentals, please visit www.marriott.com. Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/MarriottVacClub. While in Aruba, please call Tel: 520-6880 for more information or to schedule a personal appointment. □



POINTS-BASED OWNERSHIP

New Destinations. More Choices.



The French Steakhouse delivers dining under the stars



Eagle Beach – The French Steakhouse at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa prides itself on the elegant dining experience it offers patrons. Reminiscent of a 1950s French café, the fully air-conditioned indoor dining room delights diners with its sparkling china, crisp linen, interesting bread baskets, and hand-painted tiles bordering the walls. A gracious staff, colossal desserts, and live jazz performed by Eddy Samson on piano add the perfect touches. Yet recently the idea of adding a garden spot to the existing blueprint began to sprout in the creative mind of Executive Chef George Hoek, and he immediately recruited the landscapers to create the intimate, lovely setting. Now patrons have another charming dining option at the French Steakhouse—a tropical alfresco courtyard featuring delicious cuisine under the stars. Diners can choose from the restaurant's famed "Ooh-La-La" menu offerings, including creative appetizers, soups, salads, seafood dishes, poultry, and the pièce de résistance—South American and USDA beef specialties. Among other popular appetizers, the chef's Tropical Crab Cakes with pineapple-mango salsa and the Teriyaki-Glazed Seared Duck Breast served with garden greens and balsamic dressing are real crowd-pleasers. The French Onion Soup is true to the restaurant's roots while the Honey-Glazed Salmon Salad winks at the exotic East with a sweet soy dressing.



Seafood dishes range from the fresh Catch of the Day, prepared according to preference, to the amazingly decadent Caribbean Stuffed Shrimp with Crabmeat and Bacon. The tequila and sweet-chili glaze lends the jumbo shrimp a pure taste of heaven! Light eaters will find the Jerk-Curried Chicken Skewers and the Lemon-Herb Broiled Chicken very satisfying while meat-lovers should opt for the restaurant's famous South American Certified Beef Churrasco or a juicy USDA beef selection such as the Charcoal NY Sirloin Steak or the Grilled Filet Mignon. Hungrier patrons will appreciate the Ambassador's 5-Course Menu featuring the run of the regular menu's highlights for just \$34.95 per person. The French Steakhouse at Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa offers a truly unique dining experience—indoor or out—7 days a week from 5:30 PM to 11 PM. For more information, please visit <http://www.manchebo.com/steakhouse/>

Giorgio's Ristorante Italiano introduces Menu Turistico



Eagle Beach -- Giorgio's Ristorante Italiano, located at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa in the heart of the low-rise hotel area, delivers authentic Mediterranean flavors at a reasonable price in a charming alfresco poolside setting. The restaurant has just introduced Menu Turistico, a 3-course dinner featuring an appetizer, main course, and dessert for just \$19.95 per person, plus 15% service charge. Patrons may choose between homemade soup and Caesar salad for the starter; between Fettuccini Alfredo, Lasagna Casarecia, Spaghetti alla Bolognese, and any favorite pizza for the main course; and between tiramisu, cheesecake, and ice cream for the sweet finale. Of course, the regular menu

continues to offer delicious antipasto and salads, like the Calamari Fritti and the Insalati Bistro; hearty Italian soups; fresh fish dishes, including Salmone Affogaro in Bianco; pasta dishes, like the Tortellini alla Gorgonzola; pizzas; meat dishes, like the Fileto Di Bue alla Castellana; decadent desserts, such as the Cream-Filled Cannoli; flavorful coffees; and the finest Italian wines. Executive Chef George Hoek is the resort's much-appreciated culinary expert. He was the recent recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Shoco Award, presented by the Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association in collaboration with the Digicel Group. The award is a national award of excellence and Aruba's top professional decoration in the hospitality industry. Open 7 days a week for breakfast and dinner, Giorgio's makes authentic Italian cuisine a reality on Aruba. Patrons are cordially invited to bring a healthy appetite.

Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar reinvents beach cuisine



Eagle Beach – Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa is widely recognized as the home of beach cuisine. Executive Chef George Hoek and his culinary team serve a sun-splashed menu on the oceanfront terrace, raising the restaurant to must-try status. Inspired by American, Mexican, Thai, Jamaican, Cuban, Greek, and Mediterranean kitchens, the menu lists favorite international dishes all served with a tropical, Caribbean flair. Patrons can choose from a variety of tasty starters, like Wings on Fire and the Fiesta Snack Platter. Pega Pega's Sun-Sational Salads—including the Thai Chicken Salad and the Caribbean Fruit Symphony—provide a light lunch alternative. From the sandwich

board come the Cuban-Pressed Chicken Sandwich, the Grilled Grouper Reuben Sandwich, the Cudarebo Fish Taco, and the Philly Steak Sandwich. Mid-day platters also include vegetarian options and a variety of oversized beef burgers. Pega Pega's tropical & frozen cocktail list leaves nothing out. A wide range of frosty beverages—from daiquiris, coladas, margaritas, and fruit or ice-cream smoothies to specialty blends like the Yellow Bird, Sex on the Beach, and the Cabuya—pretty much guarantees the perfect refreshing addition to lunch. A daily happy hour featuring live music is a great way to watch the sunset and kick off the evening. Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar is open on fabulous Eagle Beach every day from noon to 5 PM for lunch and from 11 AM to 11 PM for drinks. Patrons are cordially welcomed to enjoy the unrivaled views, caring service, and relaxed atmosphere of one of Aruba's oldest beach bars.



Report: NFL has plan if work stoppage occurs

NEW YORK – The NFL reportedly has laid out a plan for its employees if there is a work stoppage next year after the contract with the players expires.

Fox Sports reported Sunday that the plan would include unpaid leaves of absence and pay cuts, depending on how long games are not played in 2011.

The league would not confirm any details in the Fox report.

“Our employees are aware both of the strident comments coming from the NFLPA leadership for more than a year and the union’s current actions to position itself to decertify and go out of business,” NFL spokesman Greg Aiello told The Associated Press in an e-mail. “Our employees want to know what we would do if, despite our best good-faith efforts, no agreement is reached. Our primary focus remains on negotiating a new agreement as soon as possible.”

Union spokesman George Atallah noted that the owners opted out of the collective bargaining agreement with the players in 2008; it expires in March and little progress has been made in negotiating sessions.

“It’s a shame that the NFL would put even more jobs at stake,” Atallah said of league employees other than the players. “Neither the players, nor the employees that would be affected by this across the country, asked for this.” □

AP Top 25



Nevada's Via Taua celebrates a touchdown with his teammates in a game against BYU during the first half of an NCAA college football game at LaVell Edwards Stadium in Provo, Utah, Saturday, Sept. 25, 2010. Nevada beat BYU 27-13.

Associated Press

Nevada ranked in AP poll for first time since 1948

Read Page B3

FISTS OF FURYK

Jim Furyk reacts after winning the FedEx Cup and The Tour Championship golf tournament at East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010. Furyk capped off a wild day in the rain with a bunker shot worth \$10 million.

Associated Press
PAGE 5

CHASED DOWN

Four-time Sprint Cup champion shoots to second in the points standings.

Jimmie Johnson takes the checkered flag to win the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010, at Dover International Speedway in Dover, Del.

Associated Press

Cain takes no-no into 8th, Giants top Rockies 4-2

DENVER (AP) — Matt Cain didn't allow a hit into the eighth inning, pitching the San Francisco Giants past the fading Colorado Rockies 4-2 on Sunday and back into first place in the National League West.

NL Roundup San Francisco moved a half-game ahead of San Diego, which lost to Cincinnati. The Rockies, who have dropped six of seven, fell 4½ games behind the Giants and four back of the Padres in the wild-card race.

Cain (13-10) held the Rockies hitless until speedy Jay Payton legged out an infield single with one out in the eighth.

Pinch-hitter Melvin Mora connected for a

two-run homer, ending Cain's scoreless streak at 20 innings.

Still, the right-hander went the distance on a three-hitter for his 12th career complete game and fourth this season. He won his fourth straight start and hasn't lost in seven outings since Aug. 18.

Freddy Sanchez homered off Jorge De La Rosa (8-6), and Cody Ross also went deep for the Giants.

At San Diego, Chris Heisey homered and hit a three-run double to lead Cincinnati to a romp over San Diego that reduced its magic number to one for winning the NL Central.

Continued on Page B4



Jimmie Johnson, bottom center, celebrates in victory lane after he won the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race, Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010, at Dover International Speedway in Dover, Del.

By DAN GELSTON

AP Sports Writer

DOVER, Del. — Jimmie Johnson had it all. He won the pole, dominated again to win at Dover International Speedway, and even held his baby daughter in his arms in Victory Lane for the first time.

He called it a dream weekend.

Yet, it wasn't enough for the four-time Cup champion.

Not even close.

Johnson let the field know his bid for a fifth straight title is alive and thriving by winning the second race of the Chase for the Sprint

Cup championship on Sunday for his sixth victory of the season. He won't be truly happy with the result until he's hoisting the series trophy and celebrating another championship after the finale.

"Yes, today was a big victory and hopefully a step toward the championship," Johnson said, "but it's not the prize we want."

Johnson has owned Dover the last two years, winning for the third time in four races on the mile concrete oval. He shook off a rare poor finish in last week's Chase opener at New Hampshire

Johnson wins Chase race at Dover International

to turn the fastest qualifying lap, cruise to the checkered flag and shoot to second in the points standings.

Johnson has few better tracks to jump-start his championship run than Dover with six career wins and 12 top-10 finishes in 18 races. He was sensational in the No. 48 Chevrolet here in May until a rare pit road mistake put him in 16th place.

"There's a very unique rhythm to driving this track and it's just suited my style," Johnson said.

Chase drivers filled five of the top-six spots. Jeff Burton was second, Kurt Busch was fourth, Carl Edwards fifth and Kyle Busch sixth. Joey Logano spoiled the sweep with a second-place finish.

Burton said no one should ever count out Johnson.

"They're good," he said. "They're not good, they're great. That word is not being overused when I say that."

Danny Hamlin kept his points lead with a ninth-place finish. He holds a 35-point advantage over Johnson heading into next week's race at Kansas Speedway. The points leader after Dover has never gone on to win the championship since the Chase's inception in 2004.

"A lot of people are waiting

for us to slip up like we have in the past, but I don't see it this time around," Hamlin said. "I just think our team is too focused at this point and we're running too well for that to happen. I think it's going to go all the way to the wire."

Hamlin is a strong favorite to thwart Johnson's drive for five. Hamlin's average finish at Dover was 22.8 in nine previous races — only Daytona at 23.1 is a more troublesome spot for the Joe Gibbs Racing contender — so Sunday was a positive sign for his title run over the final eight races of the season.

His points lead is the largest for any driver after the second Chase race.

"The original goal was to be 80 points back after Kansas," he said. "Well, that goal has been shifted now."

Hamlin had an active weekend. First, he blasted Clint Bowyer's explanation for driving an illegal car in his New Hampshire victory. Then, he was bumped by Kevin Harvick, Bowyer's teammate, in practice Saturday and the two got into a screaming match in the garage.

Hamlin considered the issue over.

Dover lacked the drama of last week's opener when

Tony Stewart lost a big

gamble and ran out of fuel right before the white flag lap, allowing Bowyer to zip past for the win. Bowyer's celebration was short-lived after he flunked a follow-up inspection last week and was docked 150 points. His rough stretch continued with a 25th-place finish and — unless he can win Wednesday's appeal — his championship hopes are all but dashed.

Bowyer's car was again taken by NASCAR back to its North Carolina research and development center for a more thorough examination. No car failed Sunday's postrace inspection.

Chase drivers were scattered throughout the results. Jeff Gordon was 11th, and Harvick 15th. Matt Kenseth battled a cut tire to finish 18th and Greg Biffle was 19th. Stewart was 21st.

Title hopes are grim for Stewart (10th place, 162 points out) and Kenseth (11th place, 165 points out).

Johnson finished 25th last Sunday at New Hampshire. It was the worst showing for any driver in the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship and dumped him from second to seventh in points.

This time, Johnson led a race-high 191 laps and was greeted by smiling owner Rick Hendrick in Victory Lane. "Last week didn't turn out like we wanted," Johnson said. "I don't look all that excited right now but there's a huge weight off my shoulders that we were able to come and win a race in the Chase, rebound from last weekend and we're in the middle of this thing and we're really, really excited." □

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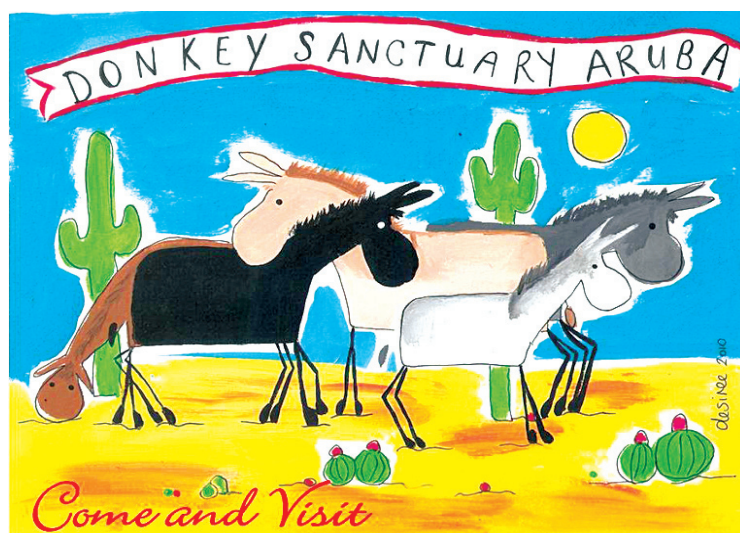
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Nevada ranked in AP poll for first time since 1948

By RALPH D. RUSSO

AP College Football Writer

NEW YORK — The only previous time Nevada was ranked in the AP Top 25, the Wolf Pack ended the season playing in the Harbor Bowl in San Diego.

That was 1948.

It took 62 years, but Nevada is back in The Associated Press poll. The Wolf Pack were No. 25 in the poll released Sunday and are off to a 4-0 start for the first time since 1991, the year before they jumped from I-AA to I-A.

"It's very exciting news," coach Chris Ault told the AP in a telephone interview Sunday. "I'm sure our players will be fired up."

The first month of the season closed with the preseason top three in the rankings unchanged: Alabama is No. 1, followed by Ohio State and Boise State.

The Crimson Tide had its toughest challenge yet Saturday, coming from behind to beat Arkansas 24-20. The road victory helped the Tide gain five first-place votes to 57. Ohio State, which rolled to a 73-20 victory against Eastern Michigan, received two first-place votes and Boise State, which beat Oregon State 37-24, received one.

The USA Today coaches' poll has the same top three teams. No. 4 Oregon and No. 5 TCU flip-flopped spots this week. No. 6 Nebraska held its position and No. 7 Florida moved up two heading into its big game at Alabama on Saturday.

No. 8 Oklahoma was followed by Stanford, which jumped seven spots to No. 9 and No. 10 Auburn, which also gained seven spots.

The Cardinal are 4-0 for the first time since 1986 after beating Notre Dame 37-14,

and have their best AP ranking since ending the 1992 season No. 9.

No. 21 Texas dropped 14 spots after a stunningly lopsided 34-12 home loss to UCLA.

West Virginia and Oregon State dropped out of the rankings.

No. 23 North Carolina State (4-0), off to its best start since 2002, was the other Wolfpack to move into the poll this week. N.C. State is ranked for the first time since 2003.

As for the Wolf Pack from Reno, Ault, who was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 2002 — after the second time he stepped down as Nevada coach — is in his third stint leading his alma mater. The 63-year-old is 210-96-1 in 26 seasons with no plans to leave again anytime soon. The Wolf Pack have emerged as Boise State's toughest rival in the Western Athletic Conference in recent seasons using an offense Ault invented in 2005.

He put a new spin on the shotgun-spread offense and came up with the pistol. In the pistol, the quarterback

lines up in a short shotgun, a few yards behind center, and a tailback lines up behind the quarterback.

With dual-threat quarterback Colin Kaepernick directing the pistol, Nevada has had one of the most potent offenses in the country in recent seasons.

"He's been our starter for 3 1/2 years and that experience you can't say enough about it, especially in our offense, which is fairly sophisticated," Ault said.

The Wolf Pack have averaged more than 33 points per game each of the last five seasons, and are at 44.8 heading into October. The difference this season is Nevada is allowing only 18 points per game, with nonconference victories at home against California (52-31) and at BYU (27-13) on Saturday. "We are playing better defense," Ault said. "These last two years we were average at best on defense and it put so much pressure on offense to be productive."

"We're getting better every game and giving our offense more opportunities."



Alabama running back Mark Ingram (22) pushes over the goal line past Arkansas safety Rudell Crim (4) and Arkansas linebacker Freddy Burton (46) late the second half of an NCAA college football game in Fayetteville, Ark., Saturday, Sept. 25, 2010. Alabama defeated Arkansas 24-20.

Associated Press

Nevada plays at rival UNLV on Saturday, then moves into its WAC schedule. Way down the road, the Wolf Pack hosts No. 3 Boise State on Nov. 26 in what could be one of the biggest WAC games ever. Both teams are not long for the WAC, though. Boise State is leaving for the Mountain West Conference after this season. Nevada has also accepted an invite to the MWC, though when the Wolf Pack will

make the change is up in the air. Nevada would like it to be next season, but the WAC insists the Pack can't go until 2012.

As for the rest of the AP poll this week, Wisconsin was No. 11, followed by LSU, Utah, Arizona and Arkansas, which dropped five spots to No. 15. The rest of the top 20 was Miami, Iowa, Southern California, South Carolina and Michigan. □

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San Francisco Giants starting pitcher Matt Cain throws in the first inning of a baseball game against the Colorado Rockies at Coors Field in Denver on Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010.

Associated Press

NL ROUNDUP

Continued from Page B1

Joey Votto and Brandon Phillips also homered for the Reds, denied a chance to clinch the division title Sunday when St. Louis beat the Chicago Cubs. Cincinnati is off Monday and then opens a three-game series at home Tuesday night against Houston.

San Diego's loss ensured a playoff spot for the Philadelphia Phillies, who need one win or an Atlanta defeat to wrap up the NL East crown.

Adrian Gonzalez hit his 30th homer for the Padres and finished with three hits. Clayton Kershaw (13-9) allowed six runs and five hits in five-plus innings.

Mets 7, Phillies 3

At Philadelphia, Carlos Beltran hit a pair of homers and David Wright also connected as New York prevented Philadelphia from clinching their fourth straight NL East title at home. The two-time defending NL champions came in needing a win and a loss by Atlanta to secure the division crown. The Braves lost to Washington, dropping Philadelphia's magic number to one.

Chase Utley hit a three-run homer for the Phillies, who will finish the season on the road with three games at Washington and three at Atlanta.

At Washington, Atlanta's drive for the NL wild card spun its wheels again, with

wild pitchers and missed opportunities at the plate contributing to a loss to last-place Washington.

Every Nationals player who scored got on base with a walk, the last two runs coming on Ian Desmond's tiebreaking single in the seventh that followed three straight free passes from the Braves bullpen.

The Nationals took two of three from the Braves in the series. Atlanta has lost five of six.

At Chicago, Albert Pujols hit his league-leading 42nd home run as St. Louis held off Chicago to prevent the Reds from clinching the NL Central title.

Pujols hit a three-run homer and Matt Pagan drove in three runs as the Cardinals took an 8-0 lead in the fifth. The Cubs finished 35-46 at Wrigley Field this season.

Jake Westbrook (3-4) pitched 5 1-3 innings and allowed three earned runs. Ryan Franklin got five outs for his 26th save in 28 opportunities. At Pittsburgh, Paul Maholm limited Houston to one run over seven innings to win consecutive starts for the first time all season as Pittsburgh turned catcher Jason Castro's throwing error into its first two runs.

Maholm (9-15) avoided adding to his NL-leading loss total, permitting Carlos Lee's two-out RBI double in the first before shutting out the Astros over the next six innings.

In other games it was Washington 4, Atlanta 2; Pittsburgh 9, Houston 3; N.Y. Mets 7, Philadelphia 3; Milwaukee 7, Florida 1; St. Louis 8, Chicago Cubs 7; San Francisco 4, Colorado 2; Cincinnati 12, San Diego 2; and Arizona 5, L.A. Dodgers 4. □

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A \$10M bunker for Furyk

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — The biggest shot of his career gave Jim Furyk the biggest payoff in golf.

Clinging to a one-shot lead, with a \$10 million bonus riding on the outcome, Furyk nearly holed a bunker shot and knocked in the 2½-foot par putt he had left to win the Tour Championship and capture a FedEx Cup that came down to the very last hole Sunday. Furyk closed with an even-par 70 for a one-shot victory over Luke Donald in a steady rain at East Lake.

Donald, who chipped in from 100 feet for birdie on the 17th hole to keep his hopes alive, was waiting in the scoring trailer when Furyk hit his hybrid on the 230-yard closing hole into the bunker. A bogey would mean a sudden-death playoff to decide the FedEx Cup. It was the 16th career victory for Furyk, but none that ended like this.

When he rapped in his short par putt with his cap turned backward, he plucked the ball out of the cup, just like always. Then, he dropped his putter and turned toward the grandstand with a powerful thrust of his fist and screamed with delight.

Furyk earned \$1.35 million for winning the tournament, and \$10 million from the FedEx Cup. He moves to No. 5 in the world ranking.

In its fourth year, it was by far the most riveting finale of the FedEx Cup. With an hour to go, the five players who had a chance to win the cup included Nick Watney, who started the week as the No. 28 seed in a 30-man field.

It was all in Furyk's hands when he birdied the 15th to

build a three-shot lead, and Paul Casey bogeyed the 17th hole ahead of him. But Furyk had to scramble for bogey on the 16th, couldn't reach the green on the 17th and made another bogey as he watched his lead slip to a single shot playing one of the toughest holes at East Lake.

The sand shot could pay off in more ways than a big bonus. It was the third victory of the year for Furyk, which could be enough for him to be voted PGA Tour player of the year. No one else has won more than twice.

The \$10 million should at least help buy the greatest alarm clock ever made.

Furyk was the No. 3 seed when the playoffs began, but was disqualified from the opener when he missed his pro-am time at The Barclays because the battery died in his cell phone, which he used for an alarm. In the end, Furyk joined Tiger Woods as the only FedEx Cup champions to miss the first playoff event — Woods in 2007 because he

didn't want to play, Furyk this year because he couldn't.

Furyk finished at 8 under to become the first player to be outside the top 10 in the standings at the Tour Championship to win. Matt Kuchar, the No. 1 seed, shot a 71 and tied for 25th. This Sunday was so bizarre that Kuchar still had a chance to win the FedEx Cup.

Kuchar wound up second in the FedEx Cup and earns a \$3 million bonus. Donald, who closed with a 70, moved up to third in the standings and picked up an extra \$2 million. Retief Goosen also had a chance at East Lake until a bogey on the 17th. He shot a 71 and finished alone in third at the Tour Championship. Watney (67) and Casey (69) tied for fourth. The celebration was dampened by a two-hour rain delay that sent most of the fans home from East Lake. For those who stayed, it was tough to applaud with one hand on the umbrella as the rain pounded the players over the final hour of competition.



Jim Furyk holds the FedEx Cup trophy, left, and the Tour Championship trophy after winning the golf tournament at East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta on Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010. Furyk earned \$1.35 million for winning the tournament, and \$10 million from the FedEx Cup.

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Armstrong takes part in charity bike ride in Aspen

Lance Armstrong, front right, rides down Castle Creek Road in Aspen, Colo., Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010, with fellow participants in a benefit for Camp Wapiyapi, a summer camp held each year near Estes Park for kids battling cancer. The event included a 50-mile ride up to the Maroon Bells, down to the roundabout, and then up to Ashcroft and back to Paepcke Park. Participants could also opt for a 25-mile ride.

Associated Press

PAT GRAHAM
AP Sports Writer
ASPEN, Colorado (AP) — Lance Armstrong embarked on a leisurely 50-mile charity bike ride Sunday, taking in the changing colors of the leaves and chatting with anyone who could keep up. In keeping with his style, the seven-time Tour de France winner is focused on his fight against cancer, leaving the fight for his reputation to his legal team as prosecutors examine his past as part of a

federal investigation into drug use in pro cycling.

Armstrong took part in the inaugural benefit bike ride for Wapiyapi, a nonprofit organization that provides camps, retreats and support to families affected by childhood cancer.

It's a cause near to him after fighting back from testicular cancer that had spread to his lungs and brain.

He also was nudged to do the Aspen event by his girlfriend, Anna Hansen, who's a longtime volunteer for the organization.

"Obviously, it's every parent's worst nightmare to have a sick child," said Hansen, who's expecting the couple's second child on Oct. 24, and Armstrong's fifth. "With healing, there's so much more than what takes place in the hospital."

Hansen chased around their nearly 16-month-old son, Max, as she waited for Armstrong to finish. She said Armstrong is

focusing on family and causes these days, not anything else.

"I think you're always going to have people that are negative and haters and trying to spin stories to get attention or money," she said. "I think you have to focus on the positive. That's kind of what we've been trying to do is focus on family and devoting our time to causes we care about — like this."

On a cool, crisp morning, with the starting temperature of 2.2 degrees Celcius (36 Fahrenheit), Armstrong cruised through the course, but not before stopping at the Maroon Bells — a set of picturesque peaks — and taking photos with children who've been affected by cancer.

He finished the ride in around 2½ hours, signed autographs, took photos and then hopped back on his bike and took off. Armstrong was heading back to Austin, Texas, after an arduous week. □



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Canadiens hang on for 4-3 win over Wild

MONTREAL — Ryan White, Dustin Boyd and Brendon Nash scored on consecutive shots in the second period to send the Montreal Canadiens on to a 4-3 preseason win over the Minnesota Wild on Sunday night.

Andreas Engqvist scored in the first for Montreal (2-2), and Alex Auld, who faced one shot in the second, made 11 saves.

Kyle Brodziak scored Minnesota's second goal of the third with 13 seconds remaining to cut the lead to one. Cal Clutterbuck and Justin Falk also scored for the Wild (0-3-1).

Anton Khudobin stopped 24 shots for Minnesota, which was outshot 28-14 overall, including 13-4 in the first and 9-1 in the second.

Khudobin is bidding to back up No. 1 goalie Niklas Backstrom. Josh Harding is out indefinitely after tearing knee ligaments on Friday in St. Louis.

Montreal took a 2-1 lead 6:23 into the second when Alexandre Picard's

shot from the left point struck White on its way past Khudobin.

Boyd made it 3-1 with the Canadiens' next shot at 6:57 after he stripped the puck from Wild defenseman Clayton Stoner.

Nash drove Montreal's 18th shot past Khudobin from the left faceoff circle at 8:02. The Canadiens scored three times on three shots in a span of 1:39.

Engqvist opened the scoring 9:49 with Montreal enjoying a 12-1 margin in shots.

Clutterbuck drew Minnesota even at 1 on the Wild's second

Edmonton 8, Vancouver 2

EDMONTON, Alberta — Nikolai Khabibulin made 26 saves, rookie Jordan Eberle had two goals and an assist, and the Edmonton Oilers beat the Vancouver Canucks 8-2 in a preseason game Sunday.

Shawn Horcoff and Dustin Penner also scored twice, and Chris Vande Velde and Linus Omark had the other goals for the Oilers (3-0-0).

Manny Malholtra and Ryan Kesler



Minnesota Wild goalie Anton Khudobin, center, makes a save as Montreal Canadiens' Mathieu Darche (52) and David Desharnais look for an opportunity in the second period of a preseason NHL hockey game in Montreal, Sunday, Sept. 26, 2010.

Associated Press

scored for the Canucks (1-4-0).

Khabibulin was making his first start since suffering a string of setbacks, starting with a season-ending back injury last November.

He was also convicted last month of drunken driving and excessive speeding in a Scottsdale, Ariz., suburb last February. □



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Nets GM Billy King still waiting to make a deal

By TOM CANAVAN

AP Sports Writer

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — The New Jersey Nets' attempt to acquire Carmelo Anthony is in a holding pattern.

A person close to the trade talks told The Associated Press on Sunday that the Nets are waiting for the Nuggets to sign off on a deal that would bring Anthony to New Jersey and also involve Charlotte and Utah. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the negotiations were ongoing.

While he couldn't talk directly about Anthony, Nets general manager Billy King acknowledged he had been working on a trade.

"I would say that we're exploring everything," King said Sunday. "But there's no deal. We have nothing. We have nothing. We're excited about the guys playing. I'll continue to explore and see if we can make the team better. At this point I'm excited about watching our guys practice."

"I'll continue to work the phones. It's going to be a methodical process whether we do a deal now or six months from now or next year. But there is nothing."

King admitted there was a sense of frustration in trying to make a big deal happen.

"It's a process," he said. "Anytime I made a trade it's a process. Some of them take two years to get to the point when you get the player you want. Some take two weeks. I think you've got to make sure you do it and do it the right way."

The person who spoke to The AP indicated New Jersey would ship Derrick Favors, the No. 3 pick overall in the draft and at least one first-round pick to the Nuggets for Anthony. New Jersey would also send point guard Devin Harris to Charlotte. There were other pieces to the trade that the person wouldn't discuss.

Anthony averaged 28.2 points, 6.6 rebounds and 3.2 assists in leading the Nuggets (53-29) to their second straight.



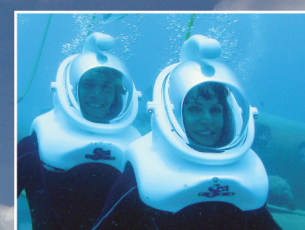
In this March 15, 2010, file photo, Denver Nuggets' Carmelo Anthony (15) reacts after scoring a basket against the Houston Rockets during the fourth quarter of a NBA basketball game in Houston.

Associated Press

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HEALTH

Aruba TODAY

\$93,000 cancer drug: How much is a life worth?

By MARILYNN
MARCHIONE,
AP Medical Writer

BOSTON – Cancer patients, brace yourselves. Many new drug treatments cost nearly \$100,000 a year, sparking fresh debate about how much a few months more of life is worth.

The latest is Provenge, a first-of-a-kind therapy approved in April. It costs \$93,000 a year and adds four months' survival, on average, for men with incurable prostate tumors. Bob Svensson is honest about why he got it: insurance paid.

"I would not spend that money," because the benefit doesn't seem worth it, says Svensson, 80, a former corporate finance officer from Bedford, Mass. His supplemental Medicare plan is paying while the government decides whether basic Medicare will cover Provenge and for whom. The tab for taxpayers could be huge – prostate is the most common cancer in American men. Most of those who have it will be eligible for Medicare, and Provenge will be an option for many late-stage cases. A meeting to consider Medicare coverage is set for Nov. 17.

"I don't know how they're going to deal with that kind of issue," said Svensson, who was treated at the Lahey Clinic Medical Center in suburban Boston. "I feel very lucky."

For the last decade, new cancer-fighting drugs have been topping \$5,000 a month. Only a few of these keep cancer in remission so long that they are, in effect, cures. For most people, the drugs may buy a few months or years. Insurers usually pay if Medicare pays. But some people have lifetime caps and more people are uninsured because of job layoffs in the recession. The nation's new health care law eliminates these lifetime limits for plans

that were issued or renewed on Sept. 23 or later.

Celgene Corp.'s Revlimid pill for multiple myeloma, a type of blood cancer, can run as much as \$10,000 a month; so can Genentech's Avastin for certain cancers. Now Dendreon Corp.'s Provenge rockets price into a new orbit. Unlike drugs that people can try for a month or two and keep using only if they keep responding, Provenge is an all-or-nothing \$93,000 gamble. It's a one-time treatment to train the immune system to fight prostate tumors, the first so-called cancer vaccine. Part of why it costs so much is that it's not a pill cranked out in a lab, but a treatment that is individually prepared, using each patient's cells and a protein found on most prostate cancer cells. It is expensive and time-consuming to make. It's also in short supply, forcing the first rationing of a cancer drug since Taxol and Taxotere were approved 15 years ago. At the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, doctors plan

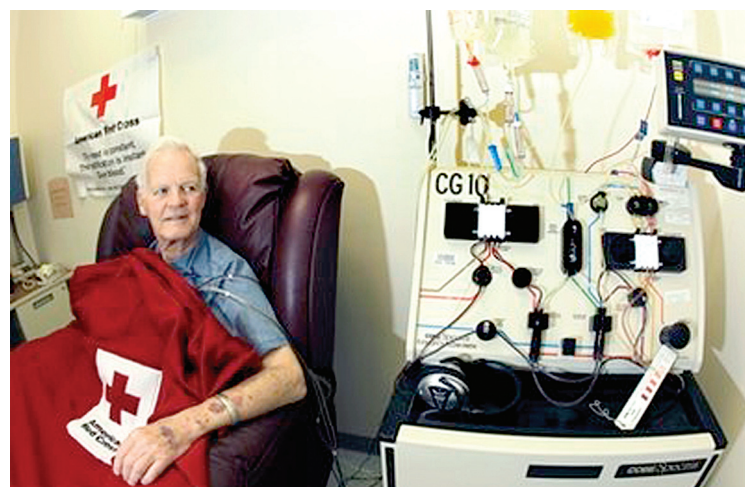
a modified lottery to decide which of its 150 or so eligible patients will be among the two a month it can treat with Provenge. An insurance pre-check is part of the process to ensure they financially qualify for treatment.

"I'm fearful that this will become a drug for people with more resources and less available for people with less resources," said M.D. Anderson's prostate cancer research chief, Dr. Christopher Logothetis.

For other patients on other drugs, money already is affecting care:

- Job losses have led some people to stop taking Gleevec, a \$4,500-a-month drug by Novartis AG that keeps certain leukemias and stomach cancers in remission. Three such cases were recently described in the New England Journal of Medicine, and all those patients suffered relapses.

- Retirements are being delayed to preserve insurance coverage of cancer drugs. Holly Reid, 58, an accountant in Novato, Calif., hoped to retire early



In this Aug. 16, 2010 photo, patient Bob Svensson is hooked up to a blood infusion machine at the American Red Cross in Dedham, Mass., as he undergoes a \$93,000 prostate cancer treatment. The Provenge therapy, approved in April, adds four months' survival, on average, for men with incurable prostate tumors. Bob Svensson is honest about why he got it: insurance paid. 'I would not spend that money,' because the benefit doesn't seem worth it, says Svensson, 80, a former corporate finance officer from Bedford, Mass.

(AP Photo/Elise Amendola)

until she tried cutting back on Gleevec and her cancer recurred. "I'm convinced now I have to take this drug for the rest of my life" and will have to work until eligible for Medicare, she said.

- Lifetime caps on insurance benefits are hitting many patients, and laws are being pushed in dozens of states to

get wider coverage of cancer drugs. In Quincy, Mass., 30-year-old grad student Thea Showstack testified for one such law after pharmacists said her first cancer prescription exceeded her student insurance limit. "They said 'OK, that will be \$1,900,'" she said. "I was absolutely panicked."

Continued on Page B13

Amgen recalls anemia drugs due to glass flakes

By LINDA A. JOHNSON,
AP Health Writer

TRENTON, N.J. – Amgen Inc. is recalling some lots of its blockbuster Epogen and Procrit anemia treatments because the injected drugs may contain glass flakes that could cause blood clots, swelling of veins, immune system reactions and other problems.

The Thousand Oaks, Calif., biotechnology company says the flakes are barely visible in most cases, and they have fielded no complaints or reports about problems that can be directly tied to them. Patients experiencing problems should contact their doctor.

Amgen says the flakes are caused by the interaction of the drug with glass vials over the product's shelf life.

The affected lot numbers and expiration dates can be found on websites for the products, and patients can call 1-800-

77-AMGEN to ask questions. Patients harmed by the recalled products, or their doctors, should notify the Food and Drug Administration and either Amgen or Johnson & Johnson's Centocor subsidiary.

This is not the first recall this year over a liquid medicine containing glass particles.

Baxter International announced a recall on May 17 for its genetically engineered Hylenex, a solution for rehydrating sick children. Baxter officials also said bits of glass had peeled off the inside of vials.

Epogen treats anemia in patients with chronic renal failure who are on dialysis. Procrit also treats it for cancer patients on chemotherapy and some HIV-infected patients. Amgen makes both products at plants in Puerto Rico. It has long had a deal under which Johnson & Johnson sells Procrit in the U.S. The drugs work

by stimulating production of oxygen-carrying red blood cells, which reduces anemia and can decrease the need for blood transfusions.

Sales of the products have declined somewhat in recent years because of restrictions by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services over concerns that higher doses of the drugs can be dangerous. Research has shown the medicines are linked to increased risk of death, heart attack, stroke, life-threatening blood clots and growth of tumors in cancer patients.

Amgen reported \$2.6 billion in 2009 sales for Epogen, its No. 2 best-selling drug. Johnson & Johnson posted 2009 sales of \$2.2 billion worldwide for Procrit and a similar drug it sells overseas called Eprex.

Shares of Amgen rose 60 cents to \$56.32 Friday. □



FILE - In this April 18, 2007 file photo, Judge Judy Sheindlin is shown at a party held by CNN celebrating Larry King's fifty years of broadcasting in New York.

(AP Photo/Stuart Ramson, file)

'Judge Judy' topples 'Oprah' from top daytime spot

LOS ANGELES — "Judge Judy" won a ratings verdict over "Oprah" last season to rank No. 1 among daytime series.

According to Nielsen figures, Judge Judy Sheindlin's courtroom show averaged 6.3 million daily viewers, compared with 5.7 million for Oprah Winfrey's talk show. "Judge Judy" became the first show to knock "Oprah" out of the top spot in a decade — and it was "Judge Judy" that did it the last time, too.

Winfrey relied on more reruns than usual last season, which affected her ratings.

Sheindlin is in her 15th year with the legal show. Winfrey, who's in the 25th and final season of her syndicated show, will launch a new cable network in January.

"Judge Judy" has been renewed through 2013. □



Smith verdicts will resonate for doctors, patients

By LINDA DEUTSCH,
AP Special Correspondent

LOS ANGELES — During the past few weeks, a beautiful blonde celebrity has been making cameo appearances in a downtown courtroom.

Her image appears on a huge video screen above the heads of three of her friends whose futures are now at stake because of their relationships with her.

The woman is Anna Nicole Smith, a one-time Playboy model who died in 2007 of a drug overdose. Those on trial are her former lawyer-boyfriend and two doctors, all charged with conspiring to give her excessive prescription drugs while knowing she was an addict.

The trial's approaching outcome is sure to reverberate among doctors and pain management patients whose need for drugs is at the heart of California laws under which the defendants are charged.

Underlying the legal issues is the puzzle of Anna, the busty bombshell who sometimes slurred her words and appeared drugged. Who was she in life? Even her name was a mystery. Was she Vickie Marshall, Anna Nicole Smith, Michelle Chase, Susie Wong, Jane Brown or a number of other pseudonyms used to fill prescriptions?

Was Smith a drug addict or a woman beset by so much pain from various ailments that she sought relief in medicine bottles?

Was she apliant victim drugged into semiconsciousness by others or a strong-willed woman who told people what to do?

The jury of six women and six men will ponder those questions when the case is submitted to them, possibly next week.

Superior Court Judge Robert Perry has harshly criticized the prosecution for "overreaching" and indicated he will bar some charges from going to the jury.

"I'm very concerned about the way this case is charged and being prosecuted," he told Deputy District Attorney Renee Rose. "If you're going to accuse someone, you should have some evidence."

On another occasion, he declared, "I would hope that a prosecutor would be intent on finding the truth, not just a conviction."

Now, Perry has presented both sides with a 15-page document he labeled "Thoughts," asking 50 different questions about the charges.

His first question was: "What evidence shows that Anna Nicole Smith took drugs to get high or obtain a euphoric state and not to relieve pain?"

The one defense witness, pain management expert Dr. Perry G. Fine, clearly impressed the judge. Fine testified that even if Smith was prescribed 1,500 pills in one month for pain, it did not mean she was an addict — that clinical factors had to be considered as well as her high tolerance for opiates and sedatives.

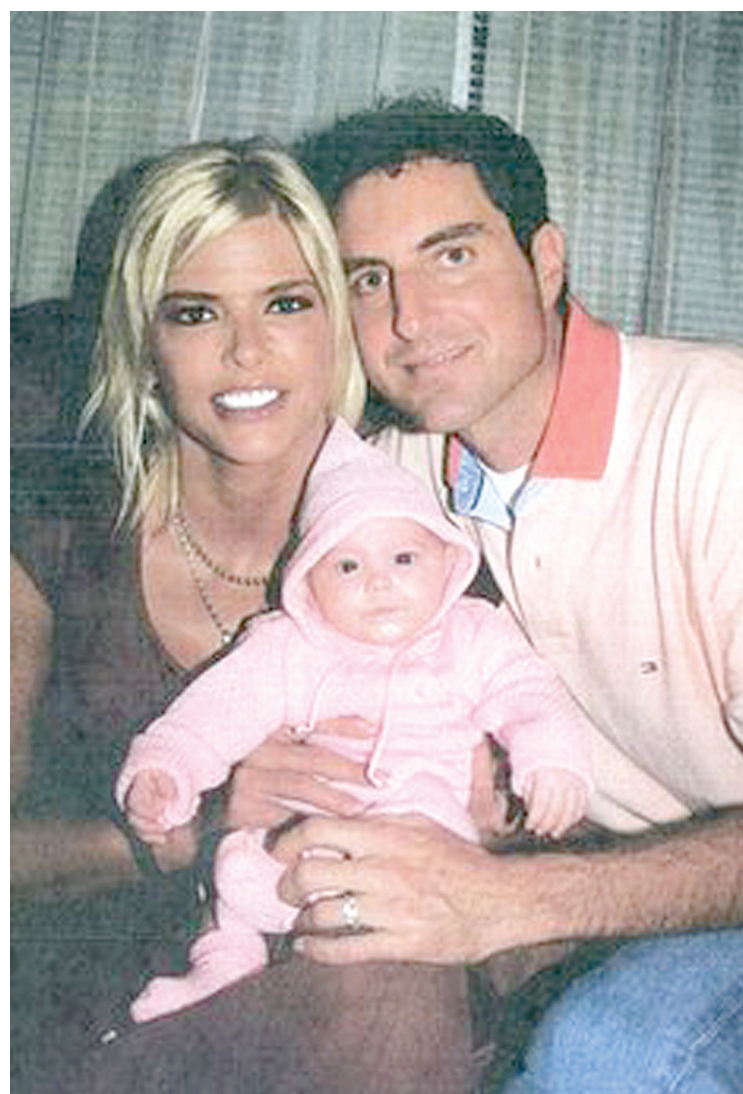
Perry sees this as central to the case and advised jurors: "The number of pills is not a determinative factor in this case. Please keep that in mind." He spoke after Rose spent two hours having an investigator enumerate thousands of pills found in Smith's homes after she died. Much of the prosecution's case has been a laundry list of powerful medications, including Methadone, Dilaudid, Demarol, Valium, Xanax and Chloral Hydrate.

Pharmacists testified about being shocked at the number of medications prescribed and one said he refused to fill a request that he felt was "pharmaceutical suicide."

Witnesses testified that Smith suffered from chronic pain syndrome, seizures, fractured ribs, migraine headaches, insomnia and severe back pain, as well as depression after the death of her son, Daniel.

Perry, who said he has researched the legislative intent behind the relevant laws, said he may tell jurors that to convict the defendants of prescribing to an addict they must find the prescriptions were for "non-therapeutic purposes," meaning to feed an addiction rather than treat an illness.

Loyola Law School Professor Laurie Levenson said it's unusual for a judge to do so much research on his own.



This image provided by the Los Angeles County Superior Court shows Anna Nicole Smith with her daughter, Daniellynn and Howard K. Stern. Suggesting pictures are more powerful than words, the defense in the Anna Nicole Smith drug conspiracy case put on a slide show for jurors Friday of 90 photos depicting the last five months of the former Playboy model's life. With defense lawyers planning to call no witnesses after the prosecution rests its case Monday, the photos were their only evidence, designed to show Smith was not impaired by drugs as witnesses have testified.

(AP Photo/ Los Angeles County Superior Court)

"But I can see why he is concerned," she said. "Even the (California) legislature has expressed concern that these statutes might be used in a way that would chill doctors from treating pain-management patients' needs." Defendants Howard K. Stern, Dr. Sandeep Kapoor and Dr. Khristine Eroshevich have pleaded not guilty to an array of charges, including conspiracy to provide excessive controlled substances, prescribing to an addict, and obtaining drugs by fraud — some prescribed under false names. The three are not charged with causing Smith's death.

Their defense team — veteran lawyers Steve Sadow, Ellyn Garafalo and Brad Brunon — recently made a surprise announcement that they will call no further witnesses after the prosecution rests. They say the case against their clients

has not been proven.

The three attorneys intensely cross-examined every prosecution witness and the judge said they succeeded in destroying the credibility of several, including two nannies flown in from the Bahamas. Sadow accused one of them of outright perjury.

The prosecution summoned up Smith's video images to suggest she was addicted — showing her at the American Music Awards slurring her words,

The defense answered with its own videos of Smith speaking clearly and still photos showing her smiling and engaged.

Prosecutors used photos of Smith naked in a tub with Eroshevich and pictures of Kapoor kissing Smith after riding with her in a gay parade to show that the doctors blurred the line of their professional relationship with Smith. □



Stocks eye strong September finish



By Caroline Valetkevitch

NEW YORK (Reuters) – U.S. stock investors will head into this week wondering if September will end as strongly as it began for the market, with manufacturing and personal income data among the top indicators on tap.

The data will be watched for further clues on whether the economic recovery is still on track and to see if the market's recent rally has support.

Friday's advance left the three major U.S. stock indexes with gains for the fourth week in a row, boosting investors' confidence that the upward move will continue.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index (.SPX) is up 9.5 percent since the end of August. Last week, its move above the 1,130 level on Monday represented a technical breakout that analysts said suggested further gains were likely.

If the rally holds, it will make September the best month for the S&P 500 since at least March 2000, and the best September for stocks since 1939, according to Reuters' data.

"Sentiment has turned sharply higher over the past few weeks after very bearish readings last month," said Michael Sheldon, chief market strategist at RDM Financial, in Westport, Connecticut.

This week's data includes two manufacturing reports -- one from the Institute for Supply

Management and another from the ISM-Chicago, better known as the Chicago Purchasing Managers Index. A Commerce Department report on personal income and spending is also on the agenda.

The last ISM manufacturing report "helped propel the markets higher," Sheldon said, recalling the S&P 500's gain of 3 percent on September 1, so "any disappointment could be a setback" for stocks.

OF FACTORIES AND PERSONAL FINANCE

Tepid demand amid a U.S. unemployment rate of 9.6 percent is expected to have caused a slowdown in manufacturing activity in September. The Institute for Supply Management's manufacturing index probably dropped to 54.5 in September from 56.3 in August, according to a Reuters poll of economists. A reading above 50 indicates expansion.

The week's data is also expected show moderate gains in personal income and consumer spending in August, consistent with views of an economy that is on a slow growth path, but not contracting. Both reports are due on Friday.

The Conference Board's consumer confidence index will be released on Tuesday, followed by the Thomson Reuters/University of Michigan's final September

reading on its consumer sentiment index on Friday.

The final figures on second-quarter gross domestic product will be out on Thursday, with the Reuters poll forecasting growth at an annual rate of 1.6 percent -- matching the second, or preliminary, reading on the quarter's GDP.

On Friday, September domestic car and truck sales will be reported. A rise in total vehicle sales to an annual rate of 11.50 million units is seen versus August's 11.43 million.

READING THE S&P'S SIGNALS

The S&P 500's move above 1,130 last week let the broad index break out of its recent trading range.

Technical analysts are watching 1,173 as the S&P 500's next level of resistance. That level represents the high following the May 6 flash crash. Another level to watch is 1,220, the S&P 500's high for this year.

"What's so important about moving above a trading range is it signals a willingness to buy at higher prices. That type of evidence is supportive of further upside," said Chris Burba, a short-term market technician at Standard & Poor's in New York.

But "after such a huge run since late August, the odds of taking a breather here are increasing," he said.

For the past week, the Dow Jones industrial average (.DJI) advanced 2.4 percent, while the S&P 500 gained 2.1 percent and the Nasdaq (.IXIC) climbed 2.8 percent.

For the year so far, the Dow is up 4.2 percent, while the S&P 500 has gained 3 percent and the Nasdaq is up 4.9 percent.

This week also marks the end of the third quarter and options analysts expect fund managers to try to pick up some of the quarter's better performers. □



A man walks past a Hyundai Sonata car on display at a Hyundai Motor showroom in Seoul September 1, 2010.

Hyundai to recall Sonata sedans in U.S.

SEOUL – Hyundai Motor, South Korea's top automaker, will recall some 139,500 Sonata sedans sold in the United States, due to problems with the steering wheel that could cause a loss or reduction of control.

The automaker announced the recall after the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) opened a probe into steering problems in August, a move analysts said was aimed at heading off criticism that it was slow to respond.

"Hyundai's pre-emptive action is fast enough to avoid any criticism in handling safety issues," said Kim Byung-kuk, an analyst at Daishin Securities.

No accidents or injuries occurred as a result of improper assembly or loose steering connections, Hyundai said in an email statement on Sunday.

The vehicles were built from December 11 through September 10.

Hyundai sold 128,484 Sonata sedans in the period from January to August, 35 percent of its U.S. car segment sales during the period.

The firm's latest recall comes as the auto maker seeks to increase production of the Sonata, its best-selling model in America, at its plant in Alabama.

Lee Sang-hyun, an analyst at Hana Daetoo Securities in Seoul, said the recall is unlikely to hit Hyundai's sales.

"However, since potential defects related to assembling are not a significant problem with its quality, it will barely impact Hyundai's sales," Lee said.

In February, Sonata, underwent the first recall this year that affected 47,000 units in South Korea and U.S. due to front door lock faults.

Hyundai has been one of the stronger performers in the U.S. auto sector in recent years, gaining market share and logging an 8.3 percent sales increase in 2009, while the industry fell 21 percent overall to the lowest levels since the early 1980s. Hyundai's affiliate Kia Motors said in early September its co-chief executive resigned to take responsibility for nearly 86,000 recalls of some of its models, including the Soul compact sedan. □

Newark hopes Facebook gift translates to results

By GEOFF MULVIHILL,
Associated Press Writer

NEWARK, N.J. — New Jersey has already thrown enough money at its largest school district to make it among the nation's best-funded, yet it remains in the pits. Can a \$100 million gift from the founder of Facebook really turn it around?

The money hasn't even arrived, but it's already creating a buzz in Newark, where three out of five third-graders can't read and write at their grade level. Barely half the students who begin high school manage to graduate, and most of them do so without passing the state's standard graduation exam.

"This money makes us feel good about ourselves, that we're being noticed," said 15-year-old Estephany Balbuena, a student at Newark's Arts High School. "There's a bad reputation of Newark, but it's not true. Some of us are successful."

The three players seeking to turn the windfall into a renaissance — a 26-year-old Internet wunderkind, a Democratic mayor described by Oprah Winfrey as a "rock star" and a Republican governor drawing criticism and acclaim for his budget-slashing ways — announced their plans Friday on Winfrey's talk show.

Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg said he would donate \$100 million worth of Facebook stock over the next five years through his new Startup: Education foundation. Gov. Chris Christie said he would give Mayor Cory Booker a major role in overseeing any major changes in the district, which the state took over in 1995 because of persistently low test scores and wasteful spending.

Booker pledged to raise an additional \$150 million for the effort.

"What's the alternative? Is it to continue what we're doing now, with nearly a 50 percent dropout rate?" Christie said. "I'm much more willing to take risks and take chances



FILE - In this May, 26, 2010 file photo, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg talks about the social network site's new privacy settings in Palo Alto, Calif. Schools in New Jersey's largest city are poised to receive \$100 million Friday, Sept. 24, 2010, from the founder of Facebook.

when it comes to this."

Zuckerberg paid a visit to Newark on Saturday, spending time with Booker and holding a press conference with the mayor and the governor at a downtown hotel. The three were short on specifics, saying that a key first step of the process would be getting community input on changes that need to be made.

Recounting how his grandmother had been a teacher and his parents had worked hard to give himself and his three sisters a good education, Zuckerberg said he hoped to do the same, not just for thousands of Newark students, but to help create a new model for successful public education that could be replicated nationwide. He dismissed questions about the timing of his donation, which coincides with the release of a movie about Facebook that portrays him in a less than flattering light. "This (donation) is something that's going to play out for years," he said. New Jersey's Supreme Court has found in rulings over the past two decades that urban schools were underfunded and ordered the government to fund the most impoverished districts as well as its most affluent suburban schools. The court has also pushed the state to spend billions to upgrade school buildings in cities and

(AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez, file) provide free preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds.

While some areas have seen gains, most of those schools still fall far short on measures such as standardized tests and graduation rates.

Money alone doesn't seem to be the answer, but money is what wealthy funders can offer.

Through his foundation, Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates — like Zuckerberg, a Harvard dropout — awarded \$290 million in education grants in November 2009, including \$100 million to the school system that includes Tampa, Fla., and \$90 million for the Memphis, Tenn., district. The foundation has also given \$150 million to the New York City schools over the past eight years.

Most of the funding in New York has gone toward the creation of smaller schools that aim to boost graduation rates for the most academically challenged students; several teachers also participate in a foundation-led training program. One recent study of Gates' efforts found that graduation rates in those schools had improved.

The Star-Ledger of Newark reported Saturday that Gates, among a roster of current and new donors, had expressed interest in donating to the Newark initiative. □

Computer attacks linked to wealthy group or nation

By LOLITA C. BALDOR,
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — A powerful computer code attacking industrial facilities around the world, but mainly in Iran, probably was created by experts working for a country or a well-funded private group, according to an analysis by a leading computer security company.

The malicious code, called Stuxnet, was designed to go after several "high-value targets," said Liam O Murchu, manager of security response operations at Symantec Corp. But both O Murchu and U.S. government experts say there's no proof it was developed to target nuclear plants in Iran, despite recent speculation from some researchers.

Creating the malicious code required a team of as many as five to 10 highly educated and well-funded hackers. Government experts and outside analysts say they haven't been able to determine who developed it or why.

The malware has infected as many as 45,000 computer systems around the world. Siemens AG, the company that designed the system targeted by the worm, said it has infected 15 of the industrial control plants it was apparently intended to infiltrate. It's not clear what sites were infected, but they could include water filtration, oil delivery, electrical and nuclear plants.

None of those infections has adversely affected the industrial systems, according to Siemens.

U.S. officials said last month that the Stuxnet was the first malicious computer code specifically created to take over systems that control the inner workings of industrial plants. The Energy Department has warned that a successful attack against critical control systems "may result in catastrophic physical or property damage and loss."

Symantec's analysis of the code, O Murchu said, shows that nearly 60 percent of the computers infected with Stuxnet are in Iran. An additional 18 percent are in Indonesia. Less than 2 percent are in the U.S.

"This would not be easy for a normal group to put together," said O Murchu. He said "it was either a well-funded private entity" or it "was a government agency or state sponsored project" created by people familiar with industrial control systems. A number of governments with sophisticated computer skills would have the ability to create such a code. They include China, Russia, Israel, Britain, Germany and the United States. But O Murchu said no clues have been found within the code to point to a country of origin.

Iran's nuclear agency has taken steps to combat the computer worm that has affected industrial sites in the country, though the country, including its first nuclear power station just weeks before it was set to go online. Experts from the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran met this past week to discuss how to remove the malware, according to the semiofficial ISNA news agency.

The computer worm, which can be carried or transmitted through portable thumb drives, also has affected the personal computers of staff working at the plant, according to IRNA, Iran's official news agency. The news agency said it has not caused any damage to the plants major systems.

German security researcher Ralph Langner, who has also analyzed the code, told a computer conference in Maryland this month that his theory is that Stuxnet was created to go after the nuclear program in Iran. He acknowledged, though, that the idea is "completely speculative."

O Murchu said there are a number of other possibilities for targets, including oil pipelines. He said Symantec soon will release details of its study in the hope that industrial companies or experts will recognize the specific system configuration being targeted by the code and know what type of plant uses it. □

CANCER DRUG

Continued from Page B9

The federal health care law forbids such caps on plans issued or renewed Sept. 23 or later.

- Tens of thousands of people are seeking help from drug companies and charities that provide free medicines or cover copays for low-income patients. Genentech's aid to patients has risen in each of the last three years and the company says nearly 85 percent of Americans earn less than \$100,000, making them potentially eligible for help if no other programs like Medicaid will pay.

- Doctors and insurers increasingly are doing the cruel math that many cancer patients want to avoid, and questioning how much small improvements in survival are worth. A recent editorial in a medical journal asked whether the extra 11 weeks that Genentech's Herceptin buys for stomach cancer patients justified the \$21,500 cost.

Doctors also have questioned the value of Genentech's Tarceva for pancreatic cancer. The \$4,000-a-month drug won approval by boosting median survival by a mere 12 days. Here's how to think about this cost: People who added Tarceva to standard chemotherapy lived nearly 6 1/2 months, versus 6 months for those on chemo alone. So the Tarceva folks spent more than \$24,000 to get those extra 12 days.

When is a drug considered cost-effective?

The most widely quoted figure is \$50,000 for a year of life, "though it has been that for decades - never really adjusted - and not written in stone," said Dr. Harlan Krumholz, a Yale University expert on health care costs.

Many cancer drugs are way over that mark. Estimates of the cost of a year of life gained for lung cancer patients on Erbitux range from \$300,000 to as much as \$800,000, said Dr. Len Lichtenfeld, the American Cancer Society's deputy chief medical officer.

Higher costs seem to be more accepted for cancer treatment than for other illnesses, but there's no rule on how much is too much, he said. Insurers usually are the ones to decide, and they typically pay if Medicare pays. Medicare usually pays if the federal Food and Drug Administration has approved the use.

"Insurance sort of isolates you from the cost of health care," and if people lose coverage, they often discover they can't afford their medicines, said Dr. Alan Venook, a cancer specialist at the University of California, San Francisco. He wrote in the New England Journal in August about three of his patients who stopped taking or cut back on Gleevec because of economic hardship. Two of the three now are getting the drug from its maker, Novartis AG, which like most pharmaceutical companies has a program for low-income patients. About 5,000 patients got help for Gleevec last year, said Novartis spokesman Geoffrey Cook. □

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Longest dinosaur thigh bone in Europe found in Spain



This handout picture released on September 26, by the Dinopolis Foundation, shows the fossilized thigh bone of a dinosaur that is almost two metres (more than six feet) in length, the longest such bone ever discovered in Europe in Teruel.

MADRID, Spain — Palaeontologists in Spain have found the fossilized thigh bone of a dinosaur that is almost two metres in length, the longest such femur ever discovered in Europe, they said Friday. The Dinopolis Foundation, a dinosaur research institute, said the 1.92-metre (6.3-foot) bone was found earlier this year at a site at Riodeva near Teruel in eastern Spain along with a 1.25-metre (4.1-foot) tibia and 15 vertebrae.

The bone is believed to belong to a giant long-necked dinosaur weighing more than 40 tonnes and measuring 30 metres (98 feet), the *Turiasaurus Riodevensis*, first discovered in 2004 at the same site, it said in a statement.

The new fossils, in addition to those gathered in 2004, should allow the foundation to construct a skeleton of the animal, which lived some 145 million years ago, Dinopolis said.

The announcement comes two weeks after palaeontologists revealed the discovery in the same region of a new type of dinosaur with a hump that they believe is the forerunner of flesh-eating leviathans which once ruled the planet.

The fossil was uncovered in the Las Hoyas formation in central Spain's Cuenca province, a treasure trove of finds that date to the Lower Cretaceous period of between 120 and 150 million years ago. □

Swarm of 30,000 Earthquakes Reveals Volcanic Potential

Charles Q. Choi

A swarm of thousands of earthquakes that struck the corner of Saudi Arabia nearest to Egypt in 2009 helped reveal that the area is unexpectedly volcanically active, scientists now report. The seismic readings that researchers managed to collect from these quakes could help predict when volcanoes might erupt in the future, investigators added. Scientists had largely thought northwest Saudi Arabia was quiet, geologically speaking. Few earthquakes and few volcanic eruptions have been recorded there in the past millennium.

However, between April and June 2009, more than 30,000 earthquakes struck an ancient lava field there named Harrat Lunayyir, with 19 earthquakes of magnitude 4 or greater striking at the swarm's peak on May 19, including a magnitude 5.4 quake that fractured walls in the town of AlAys. Sensors even suggested that a volcanic eruption was possible. Alarmed, the Saudi Arabian government then evacuated 40,000 people from the region.

Part of Red Sea Parting The lava field of Harrat Lunayyir is part of a "lava province" roughly 70,000

square miles (180,000 square kilometers) in size that began forming 30 million years ago when Arabia split from Africa, rifting that helped create the Red Sea. Harrat Lunayyir was previously considered inactive because of its location on the margins of the continental rift, nearly 120 miles (200 kilometers) away from the active center of spreading beneath the Red Sea.

Still, "the Red Sea rift is a very active place to start with, with a chain of volcanoes down the middle of it that we're rarely aware of because they are underwater," said researcher John Pallister, a

volcanologist and chief of the U.S. Geological Survey's volcano disaster assistance program. "When continents are being pulled apart as you have there, you'll often see intrusions of magma on the shoulders of the rift."

The researchers discovered a roughly 2-mile-long (3-km-long) rupture had opened up in the area and widened to 5 miles (8 km) long during the most powerful quake. Satellite radar images suggested the most likely cause of this fault was magma intruding upward over a 6-mile-long (10-km-long) stretch.

Based on these findings, on

June 19, 2009, the researchers forecast a moderate chance of a volcanic eruption and a low probability of magnitude 5 or greater earthquakes in the two months following. A decline of seismic activity by August 2009 led the scientists to conclude the crisis had ended, allowing evacuees to return to their homes and daily lives.

Magma rises

Still, now that magma has risen to shallow levels roughly a mile (2 kilometers) below the surface of the Earth, eruptions remain possible, and the authorities have to remain vigilant, the researchers said.

"It is more likely that we'll get additional intrusions of magma and potentially even an eruption in this area - the pathway is prepared," Pallister told Our Amazing Planet.

The highly detailed readings the Saudi Geological Survey collected from these quakes might be able to help scientists forecast volcanic eruptions in the future, Pallister added.

Volcanic quakes often generate a mix of high- and low-frequency seismic waves that could yield clues as to when an eruption might occur. These signals are often dulled by the nature of the earth they pass through, but when it came to the Arabian quakes, they were detected through the crystalline rocks of the area quite clearly. □

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Alta participación de votantes para renovar el poder legislativo en Venezuela

CARACAS (Reuters) - Venezuela cerró las mesas electorales el domingo en medio de una alta participación para renovar el poder legislativo, donde el socialista Hugo Chávez busca contener el avance de la oposición y relanzar su popularidad de cara a las presidenciales del 2012.

La jornada se desarrolló con normalidad y buen clima en casi todo el territorio nacional, con algunos chubascos dispersos en algunos estados del noroccidente tras el fuerte temporal que sacudió a la nación caribeña en los últimos días.

“El proceso electoral ha transcurrido con alegría, con tranquilidad, con calma, con paz y con muchísima afluencia de electores”, dijo Sandra Oblitas, rectora del Consejo Nacional Electoral,



Los venezolanos acudían desde muy temprano el domingo a las urnas para renovar el poder legislativo, una votación en la que el socialista Hugo Chávez busca contener el avance de la oposición y relanzar su popularidad de cara a las presidenciales del 2012. El presidente venezolano, Hugo Chavez, deposita su voto durante las elecciones parlamentarias en Caracas, sep 26, 2010. REUTERS/Gil Montano

en conferencia de prensa. instalaron con celeridad y estarán abiertos hasta las 18.00 hora local (2230 GMT)

o hasta que no haya electores esperando para sufragar. El ente comicial prevé dar los primeros resultados unas dos horas después de que cierran las urnas.

Desde los remotos pueblos del Amazonas y las regiones andinas a las barriadas de las grandes ciudades, imágenes de televisión mostraron como los venezolanos esperaron en ordenadas filas para participar en la décimotercera elección desde que Chávez llegó al poder en 1999. Aunque los sondeos muestran una intención de voto dividida casi al 50 por ciento, el gobernante Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela (PSUV) probablemente revalidará su mayoría en la Asamblea, favorecido por el controvertido sistema de asignación de escaños y su poderosa maquinaria de movilización electoral. □

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